SCION™
DEMIGOD

CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND

By Carl Bowen

On the shores of an island kingdom, a young physician-in-training stared at the sky. He'd just put out to sea on a small sailboat, when a cry of wondrous amazement rose from the city behind him, lifted on hundreds of voices. The young man looked up just in time to see two figures high overhead, silhouetted against the clear blue. They flew like birds, one larger than the other, but they had the legs and heads of human beings. His heart leaping, the young man turned his single sail to follow these beings' path. The larger of the flying people could only be this young man's father, who'd been wrongfully imprisoned by the island's king. Now he soared to freedom where none of the king's men could catch him. That made the smaller one the young man's half-brother—their father's favorite. It stung the young man to see his father flying away without him, but then he and his mother had never been prisoners. They didn't share his father's secrets, which had kept them safe all these years. Only the one flying at his father's side was privy to that dangerous information.

The physician-in-training followed the receding pair as quickly as the wind could push him, but the flying men steadily outpaced him until they were just shapes in the sky. Yet even at a distance, the young man could see that something was wrong. One of the figures flew straight as an arrow, but the other flew erratically. That one careered out of control in every direction

like doomed Phaëton in Apollo's chariot. At the apogee of its reckless flight, the figure caught fire and dropped out of the sky at last. As one went on ahead, the other fell burning into the ocean. Horrified, the young physician-to-be changed tacks to make the most of a favorable wind. Soon—though not soon enough—he found a trail of burnt feathers floating on the water.

Donnie Rhodes Jr. sulked on the island of Crete. He'd parted from his Band of fellow Scions to travel to the island of Cyprus in search of his mother, the Goddess Aphrodite. The others had separated to try to contact their own divine parents, but none of them had had any success. So while the others had gone their separate ways for a time, Donnie had gone looking for his mother in the first place she'd supposedly appeared to mankind. Rather, he'd gone to try to draw her out, as he knew he'd never recognize her if she didn't want him to. The first time he'd met her, years ago, she'd taken on three different female forms that

night alone. If she didn't want to see him, Donnie could look in the eyes of every beautiful woman on Earth and still never find her. He'd spent his life learning this from experience.

When he'd first come to Cyprus, he'd used his money and irresistible charm to find other Scions like himself. They'd all told him what his Band already knew—that all communications had suddenly ceased between the World and the Overworld and that no one had seen or heard from their divine parents in some time. Whether this problem afflicted the titanspawn was unknown, but if those horrors had been cut off from their progenitors, it didn't stop them from skulking around and making nuisances of themselves.

Only one Scion had told Donnie something he didn't know. She was a surly, blind, 19-year-old oracle against whom Donnie's divinely good looks and glib American charm had initially proved perfectly useless. Still, she was a lonely and self-conscious virgin, so all Donnie had had to do was pay her special attention and treat her like the most important girl in Cyprus. In two days' time, she'd taken him into her bed and into her confidence, doing her best to please him with both her body and her oracular prowess. She'd told him he wouldn't meet Aphrodite again until he'd become her equal and no longer needed the gifts she'd given him. There was nothing for it, then, but to let the oracle try to cheer him up in her clumsy, exuberant way. He hadn't really expected to find his mother in the first place, but at least now he had a reason to stop looking.

The next morning, Donnie had excused himself to run down to the coffee shop on the corner, but he'd climbed into a cab instead and headed for the airport. There he'd found a ticket already waiting for him—reserved a week ago—with a note that said only, "She'd be proud of you." The ticket was for a one-way trip west to Crete, where Donnie had been considering stopping on his way back to the US, so he took it. Once there, he'd headed straight for the coast and the high-class bars and nightclubs that best reminded him of home. To the uneducated spectator, of which there were many, it might have looked like he was living it up and drinking his cares away like any other tourist. Beneath the surface, though, he sulked. He wanted to find his mother, but he couldn't. He wanted to be better than his mother, but he wasn't. He wanted to live in a world that wasn't beset by monsters intent on destroying it, but he didn't.

So since he had a few days before he had to get back and tell his Band what he hadn't found, he intended to sulk in high style.

His second night in Crete, Donnie visited Talos, the most exclusive new club in Heraklion. It took up the top few floors of a newly renovated building downtown from his hotel and was dotted by private balconies that looked out over the city. When Donnie showed up, the security staff snapped a picture of him with a camera hidden above the door and ran it through a facial-recognition system. On-site computers checked it against a database of paparazzi photos and satellite TV entertainment news footage while simultaneously running a credit check on the name he gave the doorman. The computers deemed him rich and famous enough to enter.

Inside, Talos was no different from any other cloistered haven of debauchery. Music played. One bar served drinks; another served drugs. A knot of nubile youths danced in a sunken section of the floor in the center of the club. Older people sat on sofas or at tables on the mezzanine levels around that. Nearly invisible waitresses wove in and out of the crowd like worms in the earth, and highly visible prostitutes gathered around the richest and best-looking prospects like lionesses around their kings. Donnie breathed in the smoky air and relaxed just a little. This was more like it.

About an hour later, Donnie had loosened up enough to actually leave his table and mingle. He bummed a cigarette lighter from a greasy piece of Euro-trash who was living his life like one long bachelor party. He danced with two of Hugh Hefner's cast-off girlfriends, who were desperate for company closer to their own age. He bought a round of drinks for an Italian rock star's entourage and celebrated the release of the singer's first American single. He steadfastly avoided the spoiled hotel heiress who'd used him and dumped back him when he was a freshman in college. He spiraled ever upward through the club until he found himself breathing its most rarefied air among its richest patrons. He'd almost made his escape onto a vacant private balcony when a stentorian voice called out from a nearby table.

"Donald Rhodes! As I live and breathe!"

Donnie suppressed a flinch and turned slowly. He recognized the voice as that of one of his father's old friends—a Texas businessman-cum-congressman who'd gone to college with Donald Senior.

"Senator!" Donnie replied, manufacturing enthusiasm. The older man sat at a small table with a mirror behind him. He pushed a waitress out of the way with one hand, while his other hand clung to an angular, delicate wineglass. A middle-aged woman sat next to him, watching with queasy fascination as a pair of prostitutes slithered over a hirsute 60-year-old at a nearby table.

"Get over here, boy!" the senator boomed. He waved Donnie over, spilling ouzo in his drunken gesticulation. "I didn't know you were in town!"

"Just got here yesterday morning," Donnie said. He took the annoyed waitress's place by the table but ignored the man's offer of a chair. The woman at the senator's side looked up at him, and Donnie gave her a brief, distracted smile with no feeling in it. Her eyes widened just slightly in nervous appreciation, and color rose in her cheeks. She looked down at her drink. "Yourself?"

"Last week," the senator said. "You should've told me you were coming. We could catch up. How's your old man?"

"Still Republican," Donnie murmured, glancing up at the mirror then over his shoulder. "Anyway, I'll see you later."

"Nonsense!" the senator said, banging a palm on the table. The woman with him flinched. "Have a seat, boy. Let me buy you a drink! What're you having?"

"I'm fine, thanks," Donnie murmured. He crushed his cigarette out in the marble tray on the table and looked at the woman on the senator's left. She met his eyes warily and smiled like a teenager. "Who's this?"

The senator looked at the woman like he'd forgotten she was there. "This? This here's Ellen. My wife."

"Your *wife*?" Donnie said with disingenuous delight. This news came as no surprise to him. "*Really* now?"

"Yep!"

"How long have you been married?"

"Ten years!" the senator hooted.

"Happily?"

Ellen frowned at that, but she missed the look on the senator's face—a flash of guilt with an undertone of something else. Panic, maybe. It disappeared in a blink, but not before Donnie saw it.

"Yeah," the senator said. "Of course!"

"That's great. That's just fantastic." Donnie smiled at Ellen like nothing was amiss. "It's good to see married people sticking together these days." Ellen smiled back.

"Hell yeah," the senator said, slapping the table again. "Oyez!"

Donnie pulled out a chair. "So, you guys have any kids?"

"No," Ellen said. Her voice barely carried over the ambient noise.

"Not yet, but we keep on trying! Every chance we get!"

"None, huh?" Donnie put on a fake mask of amusement and confusion. *Here goes*, he thought. He concentrated and gave the senator's mind a little push. "So who was that young girl you were with last night while the wife was away?"

"Oh, just some prostitute," the senator blurted out before he realized what he was saying. "I didn't get her name."

"What?" Ellen gasped. The senator turned to stone.

"Ellen, I didn't mean…"

"You told me you were visiting your great uncle Nikos!"

"I'll leave you two alone," Donnie said. He stepped back, swiped a drink from a passing waitress and gave a quick mocking bow. Then, drink in hand, he made his way to the private balcony at last with a smile on his face.

She came to him eventually as Donnie leaned on the rail watching the door. He set down his drink—his third… whatever it was—and faced her with narrow eyes and crossed arms.

"Did you really catch my husband cheating last night?" she asked.

"Nope."

"So how'd you know he was?"

"Lucky guess," he sneered in disdain. "The distinguished gentleman hasn't changed much."

Ellen closed the glass door and came out with a lit cigarette in hand. Nowhere in evidence was the shrinking violet who'd been sitting at the table. Her body swayed as she strolled across the balcony, her gait rolling like she was walking on water. Donnie flicked his last cigarette butt over his shoulder toward the street.

"You don't look happy to see me," the lady said. "Weren't you expecting me to follow you?"

"What are you even doing here?"

The laugh Donnie got in response was all feline passive-aggression and malicious bemusement. "I've left my two-timing husband, of course. I came to reward you for saving me from that sad, bitter life."

"Right," Donnie said. "Can we cut the crap instead?"

The provocative, sultry expression disappeared from Ellen's face, and she frowned. "Well, you're in a mood."

"It's getting late, Marie," Donnie sighed. He looked over Ellen's shoulder toward the balcony's glass door. "Just come on out and tell me what you want."

Ellen's face smirked. "As you like it, spoilsport."

At that, Ellen's body lurched up onto the tips of her toes, and her mouth opened wide. All the breath inside her blew out at once, visible in the air despite the night's muggy heat. The vapors congealed into the lithe form of a beautiful young woman with café au lait skin and a cascade of auburn hair in tight curls. She wore a green Mychael Knight dress cut just high and just low enough to seem modest without being too serious about it. Her name was Marie Glapion, a daughter of Erzulie. When Marie emerged, Ellen passed out in a heap in the corner behind her.

"So how'd you know?" she asked again. She squatted, making the hem of her dress rise dangerously up both thighs, and plucked the cigarette from Ellen's fingers.

Donnie sighed. "I saw you in the mirror when I was talking to the senator."

"I was afraid you had."

"So what do you want?"

"You, of course," she said.

Donnie stepped away from the balcony rail and centered his weight over the balls of his feet. Reluctantly, he kept his distance. "For your very own?"

Marie didn't answer.

"I didn't think so." Donnie flexed his fingers, sorely missing the comforting weight of Eros and Anteros by his sides. He probably could have gotten them past the club's security if he'd thought he'd need them here. "So how do you want to do this?"

"It's already done, handsome," Marie said through a bluish haze of cigarette smoke. "Been enjoying those drinks?"

She nodded toward the half-empty glass on the rail behind Donnie, and Donnie fell for the feint like a fresh-faced idiot. When he took his eyes off her to glance away, Marie flicked her lit cigarette at the center of his forehead. His right index and middle finger came up quicker than the eye to knock the unfiltered stub into a cascade of harmless red sparks, but Marie had only feinted yet again. Before Donnie could make a move toward her, she'd produced from some fold in the back of her dress a little burlap poppet Donnie had seen before. It wore an unbuttoned white shirt and a tiny pair of designer jeans. It had a long thatch of yellow yarn for hair—the same relative length as Donnie's—and wore plastic wings on its back. Donnie lunged for the doll, but too late.

Marie bent the doll's knees and bowed its head, singing some low tune in French as she did. She set it kneeling on the palm of one hand and lay it over on one side. Donnie fought the inertia inside him, but he fell to his knees before her, his head lolling. His senses grew distorted within a soporific fog, and he felt himself listing dangerously to starboard. His body slumped to the ground. His hands and feet tingled at the point of numbness. The last thing he was aware of before his body surrendered was the breathy tune on Marie's sweet... treacherous... lips.

Meanwhile, the rest of Donnie's Band had already gathered back home in America without him. They discussed in hopeless tones what they'd discovered on their separate pilgrimages to contact their divine parents—namely that all communication from the Gods had fallen silent. None of the Scions had heard from his or her divine parent in weeks at least, nor had they met any other Scions who had. The war in the Overworld must have been raging with unheard-of fury.

An uneasy silence fell over the group as that discussion ended. One by one, the members took turns furtively glancing at the empty chair at the oak dining table where they gathered. Finally the group's leader, Horace Farrow—a one-eyed Scion of the falcon-headed Egyptian God—brought up what they were all thinking about.

"Donnie should've checked in by now," he said. He scratched the back of his head where the strap of an eyepatch matted his short black hair. A Stetson hat lay on the table in front of him with its Falcon Amulet gleaming on the center of the hatband. "Has anyone heard from him?"

"I haven't," Doctor Aaron Tigrillo, Scion of Tezcatlipoca, replied. His empty hands rested on the table, idly tying imaginary sutures across a gouge in the tabletop—a sure sign of his agitation. "I called him when I called each of you, but I got no answer."

The lady to Tigrillo's right—one Brigitte De La Croix, Scion of the Baron Samedi—patted him on the forearm. She only shook her head in response to Horace's question. Horace looked next to Brigitte at Eric Donner, the young Scion of Thor. Eric scratched at the thick red stubble that peppered his cheeks, and his heavy brow cast his silver-gray eyes in shadow as he frowned.

"Eric?"

"He hasn't called *me*," the young redhead said. "Not that I'm surprised. He's probably lying on a beach somewhere with a drink in one hand and a stewardess in the other."

Sitting at Eric's right side was Yukiko Kuromizo, Scion of the Amatsukami troublemaker Susano-o. She flushed in surprised embarrassment at Eric's words, likely imagining herself in the fictional stewardess's position. She'd had a crush on Donnie since she'd joined this Band, though she thought no one else realized it.

"Yukiko?"

"I haven't heard anything," she said quietly. She squeezed honey from a plastic packet into a ceramic Noritake mug of green tea and kept her eyes on what she was doing rather than making eye contact with anyone.

"Damn," Horace murmured.

"He's probably okay, isn't he?" Yukiko asked, looking intently at the table as she folded her empty honey packet into a paper napkin. "He would have called if he needed help, right?"

"We can't assume that," Horace said. "The titanspawn have been acting up more than ever lately. If Donnie's out of contact, we should assume he's in trouble. He could be hurt, or captured even. The longer we assume he's probably okay, the worse off he could get."

"So what do we do?" Eric asked. Having fallen into a titanspawn trap himself once, he didn't like the idea of just sitting around if the same had happened to Donnie.

"I'll make some calls," Horace said. "Try to give us an idea where to start looking." He'd been a police officer and a US Marshal for years, so he knew a bit about tracking people down.

"Maybe we should check VH1, E! and MTV too," Eric suggested. "If he's just partying somewhere, he might show up in one of their paparazzi-news shows."

"And Bravo," Tigrillo piped up.

"Thanks," Eric said.

"I meant the cable channel," the doctor said as he and Brigitte chuckled. Yukiko looked lost. "We should add it to your list. The Travel Channel too, probably."

"I knew that."

"Good idea," Horace said. "You two check those out. Yukiko, look at those channels' websites. You never know."

"For how long, do you think?" Yukiko asked over the rim of her mug.

"We'll know *something* by morning—if only where to look next. In the meantime, when you're not doing something to help find Donnie, I want you packing up. Everybody should be ready to go as soon as we know where to start."

Horace stood up and plucked his hat from the tabletop. The others stood as well and went in separate directions to do as he'd said. Only Brigitte lingered, and she didn't speak right away.

"Brigitte?"

"I'm just curious," she said when the other three were out of earshot. "You really think cable TV and the Internet's going to find our wayward cherub for us?"

Horace made a face and shook his head. "Hell no. But Eric and Aaron both know what it's like to be prisoners of war, and Yukiko thinks the sky's falling whenever Donnie gets himself into trouble. If they all think they're helping, they won't worry so much."

Brigitte nodded and gave Horace a knowing smile. "And they won't be underfoot driving you crazy while you're doing your thing."

Horace gave her a thin smile back and tapped the side of his nose.

"What about me? Don't I need busywork?"

"You worried about Donnie?"

Brigitte shrugged, looking away. "He's alive or he's dead. We won't know 'til we know."

Horace nodded and squeezed Brigitte's bare shoulder. "Yeah. Me too."

Donnie woke to find himself in no immediate danger, but he was certainly far from safe. He'd been stripped to his silk shorts, and his wrists and ankles were bound to a wooden bed frame with no mattress. He was in a stone room decorated in colorful frescoes, with one red column standing in each corner. There was no furniture in the room other than what Donnie lay on, and it was a small enough space that it wouldn't have held 10 people comfortably. As it was, there were only two people in the room at present: Donnie, and a Japanese man in a black business suit.

"Hello, Mister Rhodes," the man said in careful English.

As his sleep-fogged vision cleared, Donnie recognized the man as Kane Taoka, a dangerous Scion of some repute. His mother was Amaterasu, but he shared none of that Goddess's heavenly disposition. Marie Glapion and a handful of other Scions worked for him in a Band they called the Shinsengumi. Not long ago, the Shinsengumi's efforts had nearly made Kane a God, but divine treachery had stripped him of that power. Donnie suspected Kane hadn't put that incident behind him just yet.

"What have you done with Marie, you... *bastard*?" Donnie spat, just to amuse himself. "Do what you want with me, but leave her out of it."

Kane crossed the room and bent over Donnie to show him a thin smile with no humor in it. Donnie could see himself reflected in Kane's black sunglasses. His hair was a matted mess.

"You're very calm and witty," Kane said in his maddeningly flat voice. "Please stop frustrating me with your bravery."

Donnie smirked in chagrin. "Well, if you insist." He took a breath to relax himself, then looked at Kane the way he'd looked at the senator back at Talos. "Now turn me loose so I can get out of here."

"Of course."

Kane reflexively reached for the nearest bond holding Donnie's wrist, exposing his own wrist from the end of his coat sleeve. Donnie could see there the edge of one of the black shadow-tattoos that covered Kane's body. The pattern of liquid darkness writhed on the man's flesh like a living thing. Before Kane's fingers could touch Donnie's bonds, however, his arm went rigid and he paused. A small, tight frown crossed his face, and he stood back up, clamping his hand into a fist.

"You almost got me, Mister Rhodes," he said, tugging his sleeve back down on his wrist. "I let my guard down."

"Happens to the best of us," Donnie said. Pushing Scions around with his mind—a trick he'd inherited from mommy dearest—wasn't as easy as doing the same to mortals, but it wasn't impossible. Donnie hoped he'd at least rattled Kane a little. "So, to what do I owe the indignity?"

"You would have to ask your host," Kane said. "He asked for you as payment."

"Payment for what?" Donnie asked, giving Kane one more little push.

"For the secret path to—"

The door behind Kane slid open, distracting him just long enough to make him realize what he was saying. He gave his head

a tiny shake and pointedly turned away from Donnie. Behind him, a lanky, grizzled man in his 40s came into the room and stopped just inside the threshold. Like Kane, he wore black clothes, but rather than a finely tailored suit, he went for jeans, a button-up shirt and snakeskin cowboy boots. He wore a string tie at his throat with a scarab clasp, and he carried a thick cane with an ornate golden head. A heavy pistol with notches all over the handle hung from a black holster at his waist. The man was Seth Farrow—Horace's uncle and a child of Set.

"It's almost ready, Kane," the newcomer said. "We should get going."

"Hey, Seth," Donnie said to the man, sitting halfway up. "How they hanging?"

Seth turned a look of intense hatred in Donnie's direction and pressed a button underneath the head of his cane. The head popped loose from the shaft, revealing an inch of the long blade hidden within. He stepped around Kane, but Kane froze him in place with a look.

"We don't have time," Kane said. "Leave him be."

Donnie smiled at Seth over Kane's shoulder, and Seth made as if to take another step. When he did, Kane grabbed his elbow with one hand and lowered his glasses down the bridge of his nose with the other hand.

"Now, Mister Farrow," Kane said in a chill voice. Seth looked in Kane's eyes and flinched. Without another word, he locked the head of his cane in place once more and left the room. Kane pushed his glasses back up and turned around.

"*That*'s leadership," Donnie said.

"Farewell, sir."

Kane gave a curt bow and followed Seth out of the room.

"I'll try," Donnie sighed. "Sayonara."

Kane led Seth Farrow down a long, twisted hallway to a much larger chamber than the one where Donnie Rhodes lay bound. Seth sneered and grumbled the whole way, but he did as he was told. When they arrived, Kane found the rest of his Band waiting, along with their host and his attendant. The host wore his ubiquitous hooded cloak, and he paced by the rail that looked out over his vast domain.

"How is he?" Marie Glapion asked.

Orlanda Elliot, sitting next to Marie, looked up as well. Her forearm bled from a fresh new cut below her elbow. Her shoulders hunched and her voice faltered as she said, "You didn't tell him I helped undress him, did you?" Color rose between the self-inflicted scars on her cheeks.

Seth huffed and shook his head in disgust. He walked away from Kane and went to stand by himself with his arms crossed. As he passed Sylvester Guiler, the newest addition to the Band, Guiler patted him on the shoulder with mock concern. Seth growled and knocked Guiler's hand away. Guiler looked over at Victor Fingers—a tough, American Scion of Ares—and hiked his thumb toward Seth's back.

"Tough day at the office," he said.

Their host ignored this interplay and approached Kane, his attendant trailing behind him. The host didn't pull back his hood or so much as extend his hands from his voluminous sleeves.

"It's been 24 hours," the robed figure said. "You said it wouldn't take any longer. Is it ready yet?"

"I believe so," Kane said. He looked up at one of his fellow Scions. "Mister Fingers, bring the chest."

Victor did as he was told, lifting a child-size casket from its place in the corner and carrying it to where Kane and the host stood. The American's nose wrinkled at the faint smell emanating from within, but he handled the chest as easily as an empty cardboard box.

"What about that man down the hall?" the host asked as Victor knelt before him to set down his burden. "Is he still sleeping? I heard talking."

Kane shook his head. "You should kill him once we've gone."

"Not until I'm sure this works. If it doesn't, he has to tell me why. He'll have to make it work."

Kane cocked his head, suspicion rising inside him. "I thought you might have some idea how to use this device already."

The host shook his head violently within his hood. "This one's different. It's been tinkered with. Besides, it's been a long time."

"Well, not to worry. When I open this chest, the device should function as if it were your very own."

"So open it!"

Kane peeled off the mirror-reversed prayer strips that sealed the chest. When he lifted the top off, yellow-brown smoke billowed up from within, forcing Fingers backward, gagging and coughing. Their host waved his dangling sleeve in front of his hooded face. Kane stood and lifted from the chest a marvelous contraption of leather straps, golden buckles and intricate servos, all attached to a folded-up apparatus no larger than a camper's knapsack.

"Give it!" their host demanded, reaching for the bundle.

"Wait," Kane said. "I'm not finished." He bent his head over the device and spoke to its kami in a low voice. He did so for several long moments before finally extending one hand and motioning for their host to come over to him. Kane whispered a few

last words over the device and handed it over. The host held it by a strap at first, unable to do anything but look at it beneath the hem of his long hood.

"Put it on," Kane said. "It's ready now."

"*Finally*," his host said. He stuck an arm through one loop in the straps, and Kane helped him with the other. Between the two of them, they adjusted the fit and cinched the apparatus down tight so it wouldn't move on his narrow shoulders. Kane noticed when they were finished that blood had seeped through the robes beneath the device's harness.

"Finally," the robed figure said again, this time in a trembling whisper. "I don't believe it."

"Try it out," the host's attendant said in Greek. "Make sure they weren't lying."

"No," Kane said. "The device is yours now, in every possible way. We've done as we said. You may play as you wish *after* you show us what we came here for."

"No!" the host snapped petulantly. "I want to try it now!"

"If you don't uphold your side of our bargain," Kane said, "we'll take the device away from you and destroy it."

"You wouldn't do that!"

Coming up beside Kane, Sylvester Guiler cleared his throat and held up the enormous, rusty shears he always carried. He made two quick cuts in the air and leered at their host. Each awful slicing sound made the robed man flinch.

"Okay, wait! I'll tell you–"

"No," Kane said. "You will *lead us* to the exit we want and assure our safe passage. We'll accept nothing less."

Guiler cut the air one more time with his shears, and the host raised his hands in surrender. "Okay... I'll take you there. Let's just go already." He turned to his attendant and said, "You wait here."

"Yes, Brother," the man said.

"Okay," the host said, turning back to Kane. "Come on."

Kane motioned for the others to follow him. They all did so without question.

The morning after their last discussion, the remaining members of Donnie's Band gathered again. Only Brigitte looked as calm and collected as she had the day before. Eric was grouchy and still half-asleep. Tigrillo fidgeted with a new bandage holding a gauze pad to his left palm, and the muscles in his jaw bulged as he silently ground his teeth. Beside him, Yukiko sat ramrod straight in her chair, occasionally reaching up to tap the magatama pendant hanging around her neck with one fingernail. Anytime she caught herself doing it, she blushed furiously and folded her hands on the table. Before her sat an untouched mug of steaming black tea and two unopened packets of honey.

Even Horace looked like hell, though not because an overactive imagination had been torturing him at all hours. Instead, he'd been up all night making calls, running Internet searches, taking faxes and making more calls. His clothes from yesterday hung wrinkled and a little smelly on his body, and he constantly tugged at the edge of his eyepatch like he couldn't get it to sit comfortably. When he found a tall mug of coffee waiting for him at his usual place at the table, he didn't even look up to figure out who'd poured it. He just picked it up and drank half of it before he even sat down.

"So, our culture sucks, and everybody 35 and younger is part of the problem," Eric offered after one long introductory yawn.

Horace looked up at him over the rim of his coffee mug. "Eric?"

"I'm just saying," the young man said.

"I would tend to agree," Tigrillo said. "Cable television's celebrity programming is the Beast, with the Whore of Babylon on its back. She also carries the Anti-Christ in her arms."

"You didn't find out anything helpful about our cherub then?" Brigitte asked, stifling a smile at her friends' expense.

Eric looked at Horace. "I hope you got something, because I'm through having ideas. And I'm canceling our cable."

Tigrillo smirked sympathetically and also looked at Horace. "According to well-qualified experts, Donnie Rhodes, Jr. hasn't publicly done anything worthy of his reputation since he left here."

"Yukiko?" Horace asked. "How about you?"

"I'm sorry. I couldn't find anything. Anytime I thought I had something online, it was just a link to old pictures of Donnie from magazines."

Brigitte smiled appreciatively to herself and nodded. She'd peeked in on Yukiko periodically while she worked, and the two of them had pored over several of the more recent magazine spreads they'd found. Diligently scouring them for clues, of course.

"That's all right," Horace said. "Better to look and not find him than not look and miss him." Brigitte rolled her eyes at that homespun witticism, but both Eric and Yukiko nodded like it was sage wisdom.

"What have you found?" Tigrillo asked. He pointed to the thin folder Horace had brought with him to the table but hadn't yet opened.

"What happened to your hand?" Horace asked first.

Tigrillo held it out so everyone could take a look. "I sent an offering to my father last night when I couldn't stand Ryan Seacrest anymore. I prayed for guidance and a vision of things to come."

"And?"

Tigrillo frowned, disappointed in himself. "Reply hazy. Try again later."

"That's all right," Horace said again. He set his coffee mug aside at last and opened the folder he'd brought with him. "It took me a while, but I think I found some things that might help us."

"Such as?" Brigitte prompted.

"For one, I think I've figured where Donnie disappeared off the radar from. I found a plane ticket with his name on it for a flight into Heraklion two days ago."

"That's in Cyprus?" Eric asked.

"That's *from* Cyprus," Horace corrected, "into Crete. Weird thing is, it wasn't any of Donnie's cards that paid for the ticket, and it was booked two days before he ever got to Cyprus. Anyway, his main credit card started showing activity again when he got there. Hotel, restaurants, couple of nightclubs... The usual."

"Why Crete?" Eric asked.

"It's a popular tourist destination," Tigrillo said. "No real connection to Donnie's mother, though."

Horace shuffled the papers in his folder. "Donnie's checked into a hotel in a ritzy part of the city, and his credit card says he hasn't checked out yet. I called the hotel, and the concierge said Donnie's had a DND on his room since he got there."

"Do not disturb," Brigitte whispered to Yukiko, responding to the look of confusion on the Japanese girl's face.

"Oh," Yukiko whispered back. "I thought... Never mind."

"The last activity on any of his cards is lunch yesterday afternoon. The only thing after that, if you can believe it, is somebody ran a credit check on him at a nightclub called Talos."

"What, was he trying to buy the place?" Eric asked, only half-joking.

Horace shrugged. "Don't know. I did get hold of the manager of the club's security company, though, and he assures me Donnie was definitely there drinking and making the rounds for several hours that night. Nonetheless, there was no activity on Donnie's cards after lunch."

"So he didn't pay a tab?" Brigitte asked.

"Probably paid in cash," Eric said.

"They don't take cash, actually," Horace said. "I checked."

"He could have had people buying drinks for him," Tigrillo suggested, tapping his black goatee with his thumb in thought.

"No," Yukiko murmured. "He doesn't like that."

Everyone looked Yukiko's way, and she looked down at her tea. She tore open a honey packet and squeezed it into her mug as she spoke. "He told me something his father said once: 'Only women and the gays let people buy drinks for them.' He doesn't like it if you try to buy him a drink."

"Well, he wouldn't just ditch out," Eric said. "I'll give him that much credit."

"So," Brigitte said, "he went in, he had some drinks, and... what?"

"He went off the radar," Horace said. "So I figure that's where we go to start looking."

"To Crete?" Tigrillo asked. Horace nodded.

"How soon?" Yukiko asked.

"After breakfast," Horace said. "I hope everybody's ready."

Eric pretended to look embarrassed and tentatively raised a hand like a kid in school.

"Eric?" Horace said.

"Um... I don't have a passport." He smiled. "Is that going to be a problem?"

Horace rolled his good eye. Brigitte punched Eric in his rock-solid shoulder.

Donnie spent what felt like hours alone and tied down after Kane Taoka left, but he wasn't sure how long it actually was. There were no windows or clocks or any such things in his cell. His wrists and ankles ached, but his bonds were just loose enough to keep from cutting off blood flow. He had nothing to look at but the frescoes on the wall, but they were of an ancient style without much detail. Men and women fished together. Men and women walked together by a river. A family stood around a table holding cups. Nothing special. The only interesting part of the fresco was a section behind him that he could only see upside down. In it, a huge white bull charged among a group of naked young people who were vaulting over its back. The image looked vaguely familiar, but Donnie couldn't remember where he might have seen it before. College, probably.

Finally, after many hours of solitude, someone joined him in the room. The visitor was a man of maybe 30 or 40, dressed in a long tunic, a broad belt, a thin headband, black sandals strapped tightly to ankles and toes, and carrying a stuffed cloth bag over one shoulder. Except for the bag, he was dressed like several of the people in the frescoes. The man glanced back out the door and down the hall both ways before creeping across the room to where Donnie lay. He said something in Greek, asking a question. Donnie only stared. The man spoke again, still in Greek.

"Okay..." Donnie said. "What's Greek for, 'Your language is all itself to me'?"

The visitor paused, watching Donnie intently, then nodded.

"I shouldn't have assumed," he said in English. "This is better?"

"It'll do."

"Your name is Rhodes?"

"No, sorry," Donnie said. "He's out taking a leak. I'm just keeping the rack warm."

The man stood silent a long moment as his mind caught up to the sarcasm.

"Do you have a less comfortable bed, actually?" Donnie asked. "I almost fell asleep earlier."

The man set his bag down and took another step toward Donnie to stand over him. He frowned, looking at Donnie's wrists. He turned around and hung his head. "I regret what they've done to you. I didn't want you brought here like this."

"That's great," Donnie said. "Listen, just cut me loose." He gave the man a little push.

Instead of obeying, the man crossed the room and looked both ways out the door again. He lingered there for several seconds before finally returning to Donnie's side and kneeling next to Donnie's wrist. He stared at the thick cord binding Donnie's hand.

"*Cut me loose*," Donnie tried one more time.

"Listen carefully," the man said at last, looking up at Donnie's face. "I'm going to untie you for a little while, but don't try to run away. If you do, you'll surely be lost."

"Are you deaf or something?" Donnie said. Then, to himself, "Wouldn't that just be the luck?"

"What?" the man asked, frowning. "Oh, sorry." He turned his head and pulled back his shaggy, black, curly hair from in front of his ear. Within, Donnie saw that the whole canal was plugged up with gooey white beeswax. "The others said I should be careful what I let you say to me."

Donnie sighed. "Of course. Well, your mother's a whore."

"I can still read your lips," the visitor said. "It's okay, though."

Donnie shook his head. "So if you can't hear me, why are you cutting me loose exactly?"

The structure of the question puzzled the man, as he hadn't heard Donnie's earlier commands, but he said, "I should show you something. I want you to understand where you are and why you can't run away."

"You can't just tell me?"

"You'd rather see it yourself," the man told him. His nimble fingers worked at the knot under Donnie's right wrist. "You'd thank me for showing you if you weren't a prisoner."

"I'll try to be polite anyway."

"Did they hurt you?" the man asked after he untied one of Donnie's hands. He grabbed Donnie's free wrist between index and thumb as he asked and gently probed the tender flesh around his carpals.

"No," Donnie said, disengaging his hand to work at the bond holding his other wrist. "Just made me look stupid. Why? Are you a doctor?"

"I have been," the man said. He knelt by Donnie's feet and slowly untied his ankles one by one. "It doesn't look like they were too rough."

"Tell that to a guy wearing pants."

Donnie finished untying his wrist as the doctor finished untying both his ankles, and he sat up with stiff difficulty. "So where are my clothes, anyway?"

"I don't know. I brought what I could find. It won't be a style you're used to, I think."

The man removed from his cloth bag a tunic, a belt and sandals similar to his own. He lay them on the empty wooden bed frame beside Donnie.

"You're kidding."

"We don't have anything else here."

Donnie sighed mightily and put the clothes on. The tunic was a little short and the sandals were uncomfortable, but they got the job done. Donnie was pretty sure he looked ridiculous, but the doctor did a double-take when he saw the finished product. His nostrils flared, and his eyes danced a moment, taking the vision in. It was a look Donnie had seen many times.

"That should do," the man said a little breathlessly.

"Greeks," Donnie muttered. "So what's it you have to show me?"

The man put his bag back on his shoulder and walked to the door. "Come." Donnie stood and flexed his knees and ankles, working stiffness out of them. The doctor looked at him a moment and said, "My name is Iapyx, by the way."

"Great," Donnie said. "What do you want with me, Iapyx?"

"It isn't me," the doctor said, with a look that was part embarrassment and part concern. "It's my brother. We should hurry. He doesn't know I'm doing this."

"Of course he doesn't," Donnie said.

The five Scions stood together in a circle in the basement of their shared home. They'd all eaten breakfast, showered and rested up a bit. Eric had shaved. Now it was time to go.

Horace shrugged into his weather-beaten old duster and stuffed his hat firmly down on his head. The Falcon Amulet on the hatband gleamed. Inside his coat on one hip he wore a tied-down leather holster with his mortal grandfather's Colt .45 in it. On the other hip hung the Fang of Apep, an ancient khopesh given him by his divine father.

Eric stood beside him with a leather satchel slung from his right shoulder across to his left hip over his denim jacket. Inside it was Giantbane—an enormous pistol forged by dwarves he'd saved from enslavement to a frost giant. The pistol had a firing pin made from a fleck of Thor's own hammer, Mjolnir, and except for the handle and trigger, the weapon was as big as a violin. No holster would hold it, and only someone as strong as Eric could lift it with one hand.

Next to him, Doctor Tigrillo stood tapping his foot and holding an antique black medical bag with three things in it. One was a modern first-aid kit. Second was a rolled-up leather case of obsidian scalpels and maguey thorns, with which he performed sacrifices in his Gods' names. Third was a heavy skull carved from a single piece of solid crystal. On his back he wore a gym bag in which he carried only an obsidian-edged maquahuitl and a sturdy, leather-bound shield.

Yukiko was the last to join the circle, rushing down the stairs without so much as a paper bag in hand. The others looked at her questioningly, and she patted the deep pockets of her biker jacket.

"Okay, then," Brigitte said. She wore purple Doc Martens and raggedy blue jeans with fuzzy horizontal slashes running in parallel down each thigh. The tight tank top she wore was also purple, and over that she wore a black swallowtail coat and a silk top hat. A pair of cheap plastic sunglasses with only one lens stuck out of her jacket pocket, held in place by a paper packet of Kools. At her waist dangled an empty felt bag a little less than a yard long. In her hand she held a custom-made pool cue of dark wood, carved in motifs pleasing to the Loa. She held this stick, which served not only as a pool cue but also as her coco macaque, into the middle of the circle between the five of them.

"You're sure how to get there?" Horace asked her.

"Been reading maps all morning," Brigitte answered. "I'm nice and blind from eyestrain now if everybody's ready."

"Let's go," Eric said. "Even if we're just going to bust in on Donnie and catch him with his pants down."

"That *would* be a shame," Brigitte said. She winked at Yukiko, who looked away with her cheeks beet red. "Everybody take hold."

Everyone wrapped one hand around Brigitte's coco macaque, and Brigitte closed her eyes. She murmured words to the various Loa in the Overworld, particularly her own father, Baron Samedi. Her words flattered them, offered them bribes and explained the urgency of their need. Whether the Gods actually heard her is unknown, but what Brigitte wanted to happen happened just the same. Her coco macaque glowed with a multicolored aura that spread out down the arms of her fellow Scions, flowing between them like arcing electricity. When the aura surrounded them all, Brigitte opened her eyes again. That same multicolored radiance shone in them. The rainbow aura swirled around the five children of the Gods, pulling them closer together and lifting their hair and the loose folds of their clothing.

"Now!" Brigitte said. She raised the coco macaque and brought it down hard on the floor with everyone still holding onto it. All five Scions heard a sharp crack, and the vortex flashed unbearably bright. It collapsed in on itself in an instant, leaving the basement empty and devoid of life in its absence. The Band was gone.

Eight hours later, local time, they arrived instantaneously in Heraklion.

"What is this?" Donnie whispered, temporarily at a loss for anything abrasive to say.

"This," Iapyx said, "is a testament to one man's genius. It's an infinite space hidden here in parallel to the finite World you know. It is the Labyrinth."

"It's amazing."

Donnie and the doctor stood at the balcony rail of the very room where Kane Taoka and his Band had discussed upholding bargains with their host. The Scion of Aphrodite jumped up onto the cool marble rail and leaned out over the edge to see.

"Get down from there," Iapyx gasped, horrified.

"Get bent," Donnie replied, though he knew Iapyx couldn't hear him.

The view that greeted Donnie's wondering eyes took his breath away. Stretching out to the limits of his vision in all four directions was a vast maze of white marble hallways, with red columns at every corner. It dizzied the mind to stare at it, however, as gravity didn't seem to fall in one constant direction. For instance, although Donnie looked straight ahead from his vantage on the balcony and gravity pulled his feet toward the rail, the same force pulled him forward toward the vastness of the maze that

hung before him, as if he lay atop an empty sphere looking down. And in the maze itself, he could make out stairways, ladders, waterfalls and burning bonfires that all indicated separate orientations relative to gravity. *If I just jumped now*, he thought, *which way would I fall? Where would I land?* Would *I actually land?*

"Come down, please," Iapyx said, plucking at the hem of Donnie's tunic. "If you fell..."

Donnie obeyed at last, hopping back to solid ground. Pulling himself back from the threshold between two skew gravitational forces dizzied him, and he stumbled. Iapyx caught him and steadied him, holding onto his elbows and standing close just a little bit longer than Donnie thought was absolutely necessary.

"We should hurry," Iapyx said, stepping back at last. "I don't know when my brother will return."

"We don't have to go through the motions of tying me down again, do we?" Donnie asked, smiling like he and Iapyx were old buddies.

"You don't understand," Iapyx said. "We aren't going back to your cell yet. We have to go into the Labyrinth."

"Really?" He gestured out over the balcony rail. "You didn't want to just show it to me?"

"No," Iapyx said. "Something else is the real reason I untied you."

Donnie cocked his head, calculating. "What if I said no? What if I just wanted to wait right here until this brother of yours gets back?" Iapyx's eyes widened in barely controlled terror. "You think you could force me back into my cell? I don't."

"Please," Iapyx said, desperately. "I want to help you. I want to save your life."

"So you're showing me a way out of here?"

Iapyx's eyes danced like those of a frightened horse. "If you come, it could make all the difference. Please, if we linger—"

"All right, all right," Donnie finally conceded. "Lead the way already."

Iapyx nodded eagerly and headed for a stairway that led down and into a quarter twist 90 degrees around the X-axis. Donnie followed warily, trying to keep his eyes mostly on the stairs until they got to a flat floor again.

"I know you're probably thinking about escaping once we're in the tunnels," Iapyx said over his shoulder as he made his way down the steps. "But please resist. If you got away from me in there, you'd almost certainly never find me again."

"Heavens forfend."

"And you'd never find your way out."

"Ah..."

As traveling instantaneously from continent to continent is an inexact art at best, Donnie's Band appeared in a park just outside Heraklion proper. When they arrived, Brigitte unscrewed the two halves of her pool cue and slipped them into the felt bag at her belt. The sun had only recently set, but their point of arrival was secluded enough that they didn't worry about some unsuspecting mortal happening upon them by surprise.

When they got their bearings, the foreign Scions headed toward town, as best as Brigitte's inherent sense of direction could lead them. They divided up tasks as they walked, planning to check Donnie's last two known whereabouts for signs of what might have happened to him. Horace and Doctor Tigrillo would go to the nightclub and look for what lingering clues might still be there. The others would go to Donnie's hotel room and do the same. They split up at the border of the park and made for their respective destinations.

Tigrillo and Horace were the first to arrive, and the doctor found there that Horace had already set up an interview with the club's security staff. Horace led the staff to believe that he and Tigrillo were either private investigators working on behalf of Donnie's father or agents working for a shadowy US government organization. The manager on duty the night Donnie disappeared showed them security footage from that night, splicing together all the shots the cameras had captured of Donnie. Horace and Tigrillo vicariously followed Donnie around the club as he flirted with servers and patrons, spiraling up toward the top floor. They saw his brief exchange with the senator and his wife, culminating in his eventual retreat to the private balcony. Horace alone noticed the Scion Marie Glapion in the mirror the only time she got close enough for Donnie to notice her, though she was too clever to physically cross any of the cameras' lines of sight.

When the security manager told them there was no other footage of Donnie available from that night, Horace convinced the man to let the two of them look around in the club itself. It was against policy to let anyone not on staff inside before the place opened at 11:00, but he made an exception for them. They walked Donnie's path, finding nothing, until they arrived at the private balcony. The security manager unlocked it and left them alone there, at their request, as he waited patiently inside.

"Anything?" Tigrillo asked as Horace lifted his eyepatch and glanced around once. Beneath the patch was a white-marble sphere inlaid with the Eye of Horus. It moved just as his natural eye did.

"No signs of a fight," Horace said. He pointed over his shoulder to the place where Ellen had fallen when Marie had emerged from within her. "There's blood in the shadows by the door, but not much. Only enough to say somebody fell down. The rail and the furniture has all been scrubbed down within an inch of its life, though, and a lot of people have been through here. If I didn't already know Donnie was here, I wouldn't know it to look around. If I didn't know Marie Glapion had been here too, I'd say we were at a dead end. Their trails don't actually go anywhere from here. They just disappear."

"Marie Glapion?" Tigrillo asked. "From the Shinsengumi?"

Horace told him about seeing her in the security footage. The doctor was not best pleased.

"There's nothing solid for me here," Horace admitted. "I wish this place just had cameras on the damn balconies like they've got everywhere else. As it is..."

Tigrillo nodded his understanding. "I could try to take a look. Maybe knowing Donnie was here will give me a clearer vision."

"That's why I brought you," Horace said.

Tigrillo set down his medical bag and opened it. From within, he removed a long, sharp maguey thorn and pricked the heel of his right hand. Blood welled up and pooled in his palm. His left hand reached into the medical bag one more time both to return the thorn to its place and to lift out the heavy crystal skull inside. This he set atop his bloody palm, facing him. He murmured a low, ancient paean in Nahuatl to his father, the Smoking Mirror, and the blood in his hand suddenly ran upward into the skull and diffused as if into clear water. The skull's eyes glowed, and he stared into them, seeking guidance and a vision of the immediate future. As the vision resolved in the middle distance of his mind's eye, Tigrillo recounted it for Horace.

"Something is coming," he murmured. "Something every Scion in the World will see and feel. I see lions and wolves torn asunder. I taste salt water. I see the last of forgotten grace. The final winter comes. The earth quakes. The broken sky bleeds black. The Gods finally notice us, but only by the sounds of our weeping. 'Why did you not act?' they cry as their war comes to an end, with none the victor..."

Tigrillo tore his gaze away, and both the light and the blood within the crystal skull disappeared. He looked up at Horace, who looked worried.

"That sounds like big trouble," Horace said. "Is that what happens if we don't find Donnie?"

"No, I'm sorry," Tigrillo said. "In that vision, Donnie was with us already. I saw beyond our present search."

"How far?"

"I don't know, but not very. Before the year is out."

"Then let's get to the hotel," Horace said. "If Donnie was already with us in your vision, maybe that means the others have found something."

Tigrillo returned his crystal skull to its place and wiped his bleeding palm on the bandage around his other hand. "I hope you're right," he said.

Horace took his wrist and helped him stand up. "We won't know 'til we know."

While Horace and Tigrillo checked out Talos, the others went to Donnie's hotel. Eric checked at the desk to make sure Donnie hadn't shown up or checked out recently—which he hadn't. He also asked whether anyone had come by to ask about Donnie—no one had. So he and the girls excused themselves. They boarded the elevator and went up to Donnie's room. When they arrived at his door, they found a red light blinking on an electronic card-reader that hung where a doorknob should've been. Eric knocked, got no answer, and gave the door an experimental nudge. It was locked. He tapped the card-reader and looked at Brigitte and Yukiko.

"Anybody know how to pick one of these, or should I kick it in?"

"I can ask it to let us in," Yukiko said.

"Seriously?"

Yukiko shrugged, breaking eye contact self-consciously.

"Don't bother," Brigitte said, pulling the thick half of her coco macaque out of its felt bag. She tapped on the door with the heavy end and said, "Housekeeping!"

Eric felt a frisson of déjà vu. Surprise replaced it when Brigitte stepped right through the closed door like it wasn't there. The light on the card-reader changed from red to green, and Brigitte opened the door from inside.

"Cool," Eric said.

"Well done," Yukiko said, bobbing her head once.

Inside, they found not a room, but a whole suite. It sprawled outward from a central den to a kitchen in the back and bedrooms to either side. It was fancy and expensive, and it looked like a drunken tornado had been through it. With friends.

"Holy smokes," Eric murmured. Yukiko looked mortified.

"Some party," Brigitte said. "Figures our cherub wouldn't invite us."

"We'd probably lower the tone," Eric said.

"This wasn't a party," Yukiko said. "Look. There's no food out. No empty alcohol bottles. No cigarette butts. No drug paraphernalia. No... no prophylactics."

Eric grunted, impressed, and scratched his head. "She's right. This place wasn't trashed, it was tossed. I wonder what they were looking for."

"Let's see if anything obvious is missing," Brigitte said.

"Yeah," Eric said. Yukiko nodded.

The two of them each took a bedroom, and Brigitte looked around in the den and kitchen. Each room was just the same, wrecked and ruined. Eric returned first a few moments later.

"Anything?" Brigitte asked him.

"There's a whole lot of luggage strewn all over that bedroom," Eric replied. "Everything somebody like Donnie would need for a week or two out of the country." He shrugged. "I don't know."

Yukiko emerged from the other bedroom just after that, carrying a slim briefcase with a sprung latch. "The other room hadn't been used," Yukiko said, "but it too was torn apart. The linens, the carpet, the bathroom fixtures... everything. Even the private safe's door was broken off. And I found this inside."

She set the briefcase on the arm of the sofa and opened it. Inside lay two pistols—one golden, the other a flat, dark gray. They lay in nests of form-fitting, open-cell foam, along with an ejected clip and detached silencer for each. The foam was soaked with some dark, unidentifiable liquid, and halves of broken-off Number 2 pencils jutted from each of the pistols' silencers and barrels. Eric picked up one of the pistols and tried to dislodge the obstruction, to find that not only was it wedged in tight, but some green substance glued it in place as well. Some of that viscous goop oozed from the port where spent shell-casings were supposed to eject.

"Is that bubble gum?" Brigitte asked, looking at the pistols over Eric's shoulder.

"I think so," Eric said. He put the pistol back in its spot. The foam squelched when he did it. "Donnie's going to be pissed."

"Was the Daedalus Device in there too?" Brigitte asked.

Yukiko shook her head. "I couldn't find it."

"Me neither," Eric said. "Maybe he took it with him?"

"And not these?" Brigitte said, gesturing to the pistols. "That isn't like him. Whoever did this must have taken it."

"But why not take these too?" Eric asked.

Brigitte shrugged. "I don't know. I would've taken them." She frowned, trying to puzzle the situation out. "Doesn't make sense to me."

"I know who took it, at least," Yukiko offered once both Eric and Brigitte had fallen silent. "I spoke to the bed's kami. He was distressed by the state of things."

"So who did it see?" Brigitte asked. If she was annoyed that Yukiko had waited so long to bring this up, she didn't show it.

Yukiko glanced at Eric nervously and said, "Someone with a set of large, rusty shears."

Eric's brow clouded over, and he clenched the leather satchel at his hip with one hand. "Shears? Was that somebody tall and lanky with a face like a weasel?"

Yukiko nodded.

"That son of a bitch! Was anybody with him?"

"No," Yukiko said. "No one else in the room, anyway."

Eric growled and turned to kick the sofa in frustration. Before he could do that—and likely put the sofa through a wall—Brigitte's cell phone rang. It startled them, which broke the tension and significantly reduced the ambient static electricity building in the air.

"That's me," Brigitte said, digging the phone out of her jacket pocket. She checked the caller-ID and punched a button. "Horace, hey. You realize I'm roaming here, right? ... Yeah, we're here. ... No, the place is trashed and the Daedalus Device is gone. ... No, they're still here. ... We have a lead, but not a great one. ... Yeah, ours bears that out. Tell you what, you and the doctor come over here, and we'll discuss. The two of you might notice something we're missing. ... Okay. ... Okay. ... All right, we'll see you in a bit. ... Okay, 'bye."

"Was most of that really good news?" Eric growled as Brigitte hung up.

"*Mais non*," Brigitte said. "But Horace and Aaron will be here soon. We'll figure out what next from there."

"I am completely lost," Donnie said after an awful lot of walking. He'd tried to maintain some idea of his position relative to his starting point, but not only did the Labyrinth's tunnels twist back and forth irregularly, they also spun on the X-, Y- and Z-axes randomly, ruining Donnie's fragile sense of perspective. For instance, one path coiled around a thundering waterfall the size of the Lincoln Tunnel, but the path was twisted such that the water seemed at all times to be rushing by overhead like a jet from a fire hose. To make matters worse, Iapyx was walking backward in front of Donnie, navigating by memory, so they could talk. That didn't make it harder to stay oriented, it was just annoying.

"Of course," Iapyx said. "You don't know the formula. And you haven't been here as long as I have."

"How long is that?"

Iapyx cocked his head and had to stop walking to think about it. "I don't know exactly. A long time. I emerge to study the Flat World only infrequently, so it's easy to lose track of the centuries."

"Centuries?" Donnie asked. "Is time as warped here as space?" He hoped not. If so many years were going by in the World... He shuddered to think.

"No," Iapyx said. He started walking backward again. "Time is time. Even the Gods don't change that."

"Ah," Donnie said. "It's hard to tell when you're exaggerating."

"I wasn't."

Donnie frowned but decided to let it go. Wasn't important anyway. What was important was finding a way out of here. Preferably one that didn't involve advanced math. "So you live here all by yourself, then? That sounds perfectly awful."

"I'm not alone," the doctor said. "I have my brother, and the others."

"Others?"

Iapyx winced like someone who's given the punch line of a joke away too early. "Yes," he admitted. "I'm taking you to meet them."

"And these others are going to save my life?"

"I hope so."

"From your brother?"

"I'm afraid so."

"And he would be..."

"You must know that already," Iapyx said. "I've heard his story in the Flat World many times."

"I *should* know," Donnie said. "But your being here is throwing me off. I've heard stories about an impenetrable labyrinth on the island of Crete... Who hasn't? But you?" He shook his head. "Is Iapyx a pseudonym or something?"

The doctor shook his head, dejected but resigned. "No. Don't be ashamed if you haven't heard of me. I haven't lived a life worthy of legend. I've only orbited those who do."

"People like your brother."

Iapyx nodded then turned around and picked up his pace. He gestured over one shoulder for Donnie to hurry as well.

"Come," he said. "Let's not talk about this anymore."

They walked in silence past wonders that Donnie wished he had time to stop and examine. Intricate geometric mosaics in every color of the rainbow decorated the tunnels' high walls. Gazebos adorned with incredibly detailed sculptures offered breathtaking panoramas. Flickering pinpoints of light danced in glossy black pools on the floors or walls, looking very much like windows into the beautiful vastness of deep space. Every corner they turned revealed a new vista, the likes of which no marvel in the World could rival. Duly impressed by it all, Donnie agreed with what Iapyx had told him before. If he weren't a prisoner here, he would have been eternally grateful to the man for showing him this place. He jogged up to his guide and tapped him on the shoulder. Iapyx stopped and looked back at him.

"Daedalus..." he began. Iapyx's face became an impassive neutral. "He's really a genius. The legends don't do him justice."

"He has moments of brilliance," Iapyx allowed.

"I mean it," Donnie said. "To have built all this in one mortal lifetime... It's unimaginable."

Iapyx cocked his head and unexpectedly burst out in scornful laughter. The sound echoed up and down the tunnels, coming back to them from strange angles.

"What?"

"Built?" the doctor wheezed, struggling for self-control. "You think Daedalus *built* this place?" He cracked up again, and Donnie scowled. "You're right, that is unimaginable. Literally!"

"Fine," Donnie snapped. "Never mind."

"No, no, I'm sorry," Iapyx said, calming down by degrees. "I shouldn't laugh. I've heard the stories. I understand your mistake." Donnie crossed his arms and looked away. Iapyx came to him and put a hand on his shoulder. "Daedalus didn't build this Labyrinth. He only discovered it. He never knew who built it. (I think it could've only been the Gods or the Titans before them.) What Daedalus did was *explore* this place. He worked out the mathematical formula that allows one to navigate it, and he used it to design the layout of King Minos's palace in the Flat World. That's what the oldest stories meant when they said he built the Labyrinth. It's a misunderstanding."

"Great," Donnie said. He didn't care anymore.

Iapyx went on. "Time magnifies and exaggerates all legends, but Daedalus was no less a genius for what he did. At the end of his life, he was even taken to Olympus to sit at the right hand of Hephaestus."

"So I've heard," Donnie said. His mother had mentioned that when she'd given Donnie Eros, Anteros and the device that bore the inventor's name. "Fine. So Daedalus didn't build this place. I get it."

Iapyx nodded. "Indeed. He only found out its secret. The story about Minos imprisoning him to safeguard it is true, though. The formula he discovered is an intellectual marvel. Only an elite few others ever worked it out for themselves. Ariadne, my brother, myself—"

"The Minotaur," Donnie smirked. "Unless that's exaggerated too."

"Well," Iapyx said, his face paling noticeably. "Not as such."

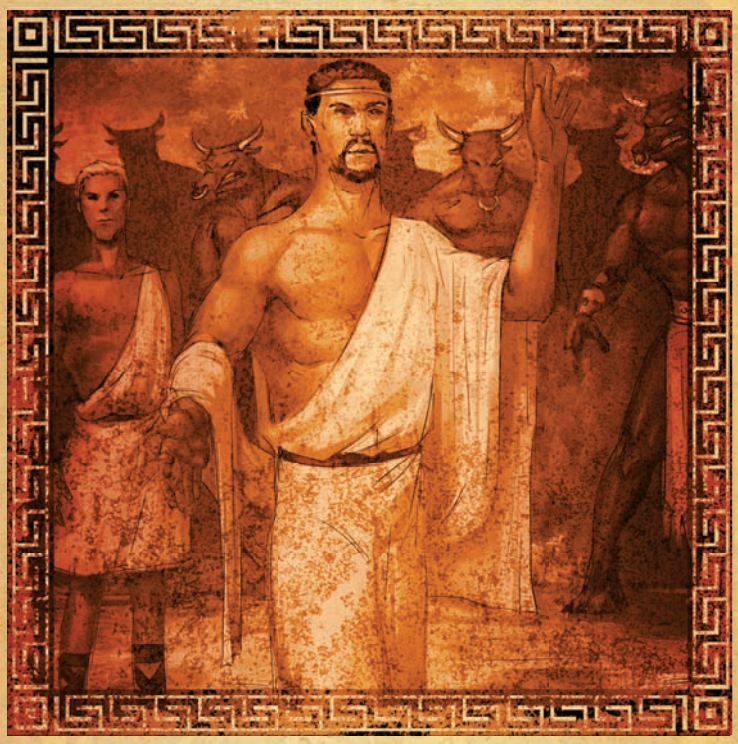
"Pardon?"

Iapyx turned away again. "I should show you," he said nervously. "It's just ahead, if you're patient."

"Okay..." Donnie said, not entirely thrilled with the turn this conversation had taken. "Go ahead, then."

Iapyx led him up and around a corner to a vantage that overlooked a vast garden of several acres. More than half of it was devoted to the fruits, vegetables and herbs necessary for a healthy vegetarian diet, but the rest was devoted to some plant Donnie couldn't recognize at a distance. The garden lay in a deep bed of soil that had probably been imported. Irrigation canals from a nearby waterfall nourished it. It wasn't until he saw this place—and wondered how the plants thrived without sunlight—that Donnie realized he had no idea where the ambient light was coming from. For that matter, he had no idea whence the water came either, unless it just flowed around and around the Labyrinth endlessly.

Such concerns were secondary, however, when Donnie got a good look at the numerous beings who tended this hidden garden—all healthy adult males dressed in simple tunics and sandals like the one he wore. None of them were human. They stood no less than eight feet tall, each one was covered in bright white hair, and all of them had the heads of longhorn bulls. Their eyes



gleamed faintly red like drying blood. The creatures—the minotaurs—all turned from their work to regard him and Iapyx as the two approached. Several raised their farming tools like weapons.

"You've got to be kidding me," Donnie whispered

"These are the others," Iapyx said. He took Donnie by the wrist and pulled him along behind. "Stay close. They don't let strangers wander alone here."

They descended the last flight of marble steps and descended into the midst of the minotaurs, who closed in around them and loomed. The stench of every cattle ranch mixed with an odor of rank BO. The creatures' breath was none too fresh either. Donnie's eyes watered as the minotaurs closed in. He was suddenly reminded of every horrible prison story he'd ever heard.

The largest of the minotaurs stepped a little closer than the rest and spoke to Iapyx in what Donnie assumed was Greek. The beast leered at Donnie as he spoke, and he licked his bovine chops with a tongue as big as Donnie's hand. The other minotaurs chuckled, all of them huffing in thick, rumbling voices. Iapyx pulled Donnie in a little closer to him and shook his head violently, responding to the beast in its own language. They went back and forth for a few moments before Iapyx finally barked out a

harsh something-or-other and the minotaur relented. He stepped back to join the others, and all the ones in earshot grumbled in disappointment. Iapyx then lifted his head and addressed as many of those assembled as he could in words that sounded like they were supposed to be inspiring and uplifting. He pointed to himself, to several of the nearby listeners, out toward the Labyrinth, and finally at Donnie. He lifted Donnie's hand by the wrist, and all of the listeners directed their attention to him.

"Hey," Donnie said. To Iapyx, he murmured, "What are you telling them?"

"First, that you aren't a sacrifice," Iapyx replied in like tones. "They were disappointed. Second, I told them you could help them."

"I thought they were going to help me."

"Yes," Iapyx said. "Just a moment." He addressed the crowd once more, asking a question that sounded important. He pointed at the largest nearby minotaur and asked it again, emphasizing a couple of words more than he'd done before. The minotaur grunted and scratched its neck. It backed up a few steps, and several of its brethren congregated around it and chattered among themselves.

"I have many questions," Donnie said to no one. He tapped Iapyx to get his attention. "What are they saying? What did you ask them?"

"If they say no," Iapyx said, "it won't matter."

"Okay… Here's another one: I see plenty of males here, but no women. Where are they?"

"There aren't any," Iapyx said. He kept glancing over his shoulder as he spoke, checking to see if the minotaurs were ready to answer him. "No female minotaur is ever born."

"I find that slightly impossible to believe."

"Every minotaur is born from a human woman," Iapyx explained, smiling indulgently. "The first bull-mother was Pasiphaë, Minos's queen, but she wasn't the only one. The Cretan Bull, who took her, ran loose for many years after its first child was born. He sired many offspring before Theseus eventually slew him. Those offspring sired many others: all of them male; all of them as you see. They are their father's children."

Donnie thought he might throw up. "So they live here?"

"Yes. Minos's army corralled them all in the early days and would have slaughtered them if not for my father. He suggested they be imprisoned here, on the off chance that killing them outright would offend Poseidon—who'd sent the white bull to Crete in the first place. So King Minos did that. He even tried to provide for their survival as a race for a while by arranging for a yearly tribute of healthy young women from Athens. It worked fine until Theseus came."

"And killed a bunch of them?"

Iapyx shook his head. "He only broke into the Labyrinth and rescued the survivors of the most recent tribute. He killed Asterion, one of the sentries, but mostly by accident. I don't remember all the details. Anyway, by the time I'd emerged into the Flat World after that, Minos had long since died and times had changed. It didn't matter anymore."

Iapyx checked to see the minotaurs were still talking. "I've been trying to find them a real home beyond these endless tunnels ever since, but no place seems appropriate. They want to leave, but I'm concerned that releasing them into the Flat World wouldn't be safe. I fear humanity would still rather destroy these creatures than welcome them."

"You think they don't deserve it?" Donnie asked. Iapyx flinched and looked over his shoulder guiltily. The minotaurs were still deep in conversation. "I wouldn't want them in my neighborhood. It sounds like no woman would be safe around them if they're all their fathers' children." Iapyx looked away, trying to hide a guilty look. "And then there was how they were 'disappointed' I wasn't a sacrifice. What's that about?"

"They are rough, crude beasts," Iapyx conceded. "That's why I haven't taken them to any of the exits and let them out. But I have recently found a place that would be fine for them. It's a mythic realm connected to the Flat World. They could be free there, finally, and never trouble mortals again."

"So what are they still doing here?"

"I need someone with divine blood to unlock the door. It's a crucial operand in the formula there."

"If you can't open the door, how do you know what's on the other side?" Donnie asked.

"Because I understand the formula," Iapyx said, as if that answered everything. "I can find any door in this Labyrinth, tell you how to open it and tell you where it takes you (on the Flat World or beyond). But there are some doors that only those with divine blood can open. There are some only the Gods or Titans themselves can open."

"I see," Donnie said, taking an awful lot on faith. "So this is why you need my help, then? You want me to be Steve McQueen for your Great Escape?"

Iapyx only stared at Donnie stupidly. "My what?"

"You want me to open your magic door and let the minotaurs out," Donnie said. "And this helps me how, exactly?"

"You can go with them," Iapyx said.

"I don't think so," Donnie answered. Another thought occurred to him at that point. He brought it up before Iapyx could speak again. "Wait, if anybody with divine blood could open this door for you, why didn't you ask the guys who captured me to do it?"

"They wouldn't listen to me," Iapyx said. "They were in a hurry."

"What did they want?"

"They were looking for a shortcut somewhere. My brother was just going to let the minotaurs kill them, but he changed his mind when one of them told him about you. When they returned with you, he was so grateful he took them where they wanted to go himself."

"Where was that?"

"I don't know," Iapyx said. "They wouldn't discuss it around me. They barely knew I was here." He paused and sighed.

Donnie opened his mouth to say something snide, but the minotaurs reached a consensus before he could speak. The largest one stepped forward again as Iapyx was glancing back to check on them. When the minotaur spoke, Iapyx nodded in eager excitement and said a few words to him, pointing back at Donnie. He turned back once again.

"They've agreed to go," the Greek said, smiling. "They didn't want to at first, but any place is better than here to them. You'll help them, won't you?"

"I don't imagine I have much choice," Donnie said. "Tell you what, let me talk to them first. Translate for me."

"Okay," Iapyx said, uncertain. He spoke a couple of words of explanation to the minotaurs and turned sideways between them and Donnie. As Donnie spoke, Iapyx repeated his words so the minotaurs could understand.

"Hello, everyone," Donnie began, smiling like his father did at fund-raisers and rallies, with equal sincerity. "I guess you're all ready to get out of here, huh?" A moment later, the minotaurs nodded and gave affirmative grunts. "I bet you're pretty sick of this place, yeah?" A few clapped their hands and stomped their feet in agreement. "I bet you want to see real sky again. Don't you?" They snorted and slapped each other on the backs, getting into it. "I bet you're ready to eat some different food for once, too. Am I right?" He smiled, and the minotaurs got a little more excited. This guy knew how they felt. This guy was practically reading their minds. "Food you didn't have to grow yourself!" They laughed. Some cheered. "I bet you're all ready to go wherever you want!" They were. "Do whatever you want!" They were ready for that too. "Take whatever you want!" Oh yeah. "Whenever you want it!" Oh *hell* yeah!

Iapyx frowned, partially in embarrassment at the minotaurs' rising excitement, but also because he obviously didn't know where Donnie was going with this. Nonetheless, he kept translating as Donnie kept talking.

"And I know what you want most of all, don't I?" Donnie said, dropping his voice to a low tone. The minotaurs waited with wide eyes and bated breath. "Something you can't get here." The minotaurs looked at each other, unsure themselves where Donnie was going with this. "Something you haven't had in far too long, I bet." A couple of the smarter creatures figured it out, but the rest needed one more clue. "The thing that makes life worth living, boys. Women!" He waved his hands in front of him in the age-old hourglass gesture, and the minotaurs were instantly on the same page before Iapyx could even translate. "Am I right? Who's ready to get out there and do what needs doing?" He demonstrated that last bit with exaggerated pelvic thrusts, and the minotaurs went wild. They jumped up and down. They salivated. They punched each other in the face. A handful were so excited they started practicing all alone. Donnie smiled like the Devil himself.

"Well you look good and ready!" Donnie went on, forcing Iapyx to shout at the top of his lungs to be heard. "Too bad, then, it's not going to happen! You monsters are right where you deserve to be, and I'd rather die a thousand times than see even one of you go free!"

Iapyx translated every word without thinking about what he was saying, and the look of horror that crossed his face afterward was so wonderful it made all the indignities Donnie had suffered thus far worthwhile. The Greek's face drained of all color and went as pale as the whites of his wide-open eyes. A hush fell over the minotaurs too, though their silence was that of the calm-before-the-hurricane variety. Iapyx's mouth moved, unable to make words come out. Donnie winked at him and raised his middle finger.

Things might have gone worse than they did if a furious, high-pitched voice hadn't rung out overhead at just that moment, deflating the mounting tension before it could explode. The minotaurs all looked up as one, at which point Iapyx did as well. (He

also pulled the beeswax out of his ears, though Donnie didn't notice.) The voice yowled again, and the minotaurs backed away from Iapyx and Donnie by reflex. Donnie looked up just in time to see a shape swoop low over the heads of the minotaurs in the back of the crowd and streak toward where he and Iapyx were standing. The shape wobbled in the air and stalled out just above them before stumbling into an awkward landing several yards away.

When it finally stopped, Donnie realized that the shape was actually a boy of about 13, wearing a long, bloodstained robe that covered his body. Over the robe, this boy wore the Daedalus Device, Donnie's Birthright gift from his mother. Enormous gold-and-white wings stood out from it between the boy's shoulders. They were sized for an adult, making movement awkward for the boy as he tried to get his balance on solid ground. He turned around unsteadily.

The boy's hood and voluminous sleeves had been pushed back in his flight, and the top, back and sides of the boy's head were covered in flaking, black, burnt tissue. His ears had run like candle wax. His left cheek was a ruin that twisted his mouth into a perpetual snarl. Moving his head tore and re-sealed the burnt skin of his neck, hiding and revealing the muscles and bone beneath as blood welled up in the cracks. The backs of his arms and hands were likewise ruined, though he seemed to have no problem using them.

The boy glared at Donnie then turned a venomous scowl at the minotaurs and Iapyx. He shouted at them in high, angry Greek, his voice cracking and fluttering as he screeched. Iapyx stepped away from Donnie, likewise pointing at him and scowling. He made conciliatory gestures toward the boy, alternating them with accusatory looks in Donnie's direction. The doctor shook his head whenever the boy pointed at him, pointing instead at Donnie. Donnie could only stare in horrified shock at this ruin of a child wrapped in the graceful, beautiful wings of the Daedalus Device.

After a long tense exchange between Iapyx and the boy, the two of them turned in opposite directions. The boy turned toward the nearest of the minotaurs—who'd been hanging on his every word—and shouted something to them as he pointed one arm and one wing at Donnie. As the boy spoke, Iapyx turned toward Donnie with a hateful snarl on his face and a single tear on his cheek.

"You fool," the doctor hissed. "Now my brother's going to let them kill you."

"Your brother?" Donnie asked. A world of context suddenly made perfect sense to him, and he smiled bitterly. "Of course… I'm an idiot."

Iapyx replied, but his words were drowned out by the sudden roar of a horde of furious minotaurs, driven to a frenzy by the words of the burnt child wearing Donnie's stolen wings. They surged en masse past the two brothers and piled on Donnie, giving him no room to move and nowhere to run.

"This is the place," Horace told his fellow Scions, frowning. "Trail goes cold right here."

"After all that?" Eric asked. "You're kidding."

Horace shook his head and glanced around. All things considered, Eric was right to be confused. Once Horace and Tigrillo had shown up at Donnie's suite, they'd exchanged information about what little they'd found out. The knowledge that Sylvester Guiler had been the one who vandalized the place had proven surprisingly helpful. His lingering in the suite long enough to tear the place up so thoroughly had lain a trail that a supernal hunter such as Horace could follow if he knew what to look for. No mortal could follow this trail, nor could any predatory beast, but a demigod could.

And so—after packing Donnie's pistols away in the bottom of Tigrillo's gym bag—Horace had led them out of the suite, tracking Sly Guiler's movements. The trail had wound down the steps, through the lobby, and out to where a car had taken Guiler away. The car had driven southeast out of the city on busy, oft-traveled roads into the valley of the river Kairatos. It had stopped in Knossos at a site surrounded by olive trees and pines. The trail led unerringly, as Guiler had taken no pains whatsoever to hide his path. Where he'd arrived was the site of the ruins of the ancient palace of King Minos. The Scion of Loki had strolled through the West Court past an ancient, dug-out magazine full of stone jars and decorated with images of stars and double-headed axes. He'd gone up a broad stairway across the castle's former main story—rebuilt in concrete by a shortsighted archaeologist—and down another long stairway toward the Central Court. Across that court stood the throne room, and Guiler had gone right for it. He'd strolled through the anteroom, through a set of double-doors and into the throne room of King Minos himself—an area normally restricted to the public.

And for every step Sly Guiler had taken, Horace and his Band had followed. But now the trail had ended. One other door led out of the room into a windowless chamber full of worn, ancient statues, but Guiler's trail didn't go in there. Horace's body emanated a soft light by which they could all see, but being able to see only revealed that their quarry was nowhere to be found. The five Scions stood together now looking around at the room, confused and frustrated.

It was a nice room, for what that was worth, though smaller than they might've expected. Its walls were red and white, decorated with frescoes of griffins. The throne itself was a simple alabaster chair with no arms, standing against one wall with a low stone bench to either side. Before the chair in the center of the room, a stone basin lay in the middle of the floor. Guiler's trail led to that basin and disappeared. Now that they looked at it, it struck those present as odd that a couple of inches of clear water stood in that basin.

Brigitte looked up at the smooth ceiling then back down at the water in the basin. "I guess he drowned."

"Ideas?" Horace asked. He looked once around at everyone and snapped his fingers suddenly at Eric. "Hey, don't sit on that!"

Eric froze in place, his rear end hovering over Minos's alabaster throne. "*What*?"

"That's King Minos's throne, Eric," Horace said. "Have you lost your mind?"

"What?" Eric asked again. "Is it going to turn me into gold or something if I touch it?"

Horace sighed and hung his head, pinching the bridge of his nose. Tigrillo shook his head.

"Yukiko," Horace said, turning to her. "I have an idea."

Yukiko had been staring at her reflection in the water in the basin, ignoring what was being said around her. She looked up. "Yes?"

"Can you ask the spirits what happened here?"

"Yes," Yukiko said. "I was thinking that."

Horace wondered why, then, Yukiko hadn't brought it up, but he knew better than to ask. It would only embarrass her.

Yukiko knelt between the basin on the floor and the ancient throne against the wall and closed her eyes to pray. The others gathered around to watch, but she put on no show, displayed no pyrotechnics. She spoke quietly and plainly in Japanese with her head bowed and her fingers resting on the rim of the basin. In the sunlight Horace cast, they saw their reflections twist together and disappear from the surface of the water. Another face replaced the normal reflection. She was Greek and middle-aged, with stars bound up in her hair. Behind her hung two crossed axes with double-bladed heads. The woman looked at Yukiko

and spoke in an ageless voice. Yukiko only blinked and looked at the woman's face quizzically. The woman spoke again, and Yukiko looked up at Horace and the others.

"I don't understand her," she whispered. "I'm sorry..."

"What language is that?" Horace asked.

"It's Greek," Tigrillo said. "Obviously, right? She said, 'Who dares enter must pay first my due.'"

"You speak Greek?" Eric asked, surprised.

"Unless I'm lying," Tigrillo said, faintly amused.

Horace frowned, confused. "Did you speak Greek yesterday, Doctor?"

Tigrillo shook his head. "No, but I've been paying attention since we got here."

"Fast learner," Brigitte said.

"I just have a knack for languages," Tigrillo said. "I realized it during my pilgrimage in Mexico."

"*Anyways*," Eric said. "If you can talk to her, ask her what happened to Sly. Or Donnie, if she knows."

Tigrillo relayed those questions but got no response. Directly addressing the reflected woman with *any* question got no response. Tigrillo even tried a "surefire" pick-up line his old Tio Raul had taught him, just to see what would happen. The reflection said nothing.

"Who is this lady?" Eric asked, annoyed.

"I would say she's the spirit of this room or of the throne," Yukiko offered, "or possibly the palace itself, but that seems unlikely. As much as this structure has changed, its kami should be in much worse condition."

"Maybe she's the spirit of firewood," Brigitte said. When four blank looks turned her way, she pointed at the axes behind the woman's head.

"Ah, indeed," Tigrillo said, looking relieved. "No, but those are the answer. That type of ax is called a labrys. It's a popular motif in this palace, actually. And it gave its name to the legendary structure for which this palace is most famous."

"Lord..." Eric sighed. "Here he goes."

"What structure?" Yukiko asked.

"The Labyrinth," Horace said.

Tigrillo nodded. "This isn't the spirit of the throne or the palace, she's the Mistress of the Labyrinth."

"Well I never heard of her," Eric said.

"Hardly anyone ever has," Tigrillo said. "But there was one Hungarian historian named Karl Kerenyi—a contemporary of Carl Jung, actually—who made note of her in his book on Dionysus and the—"

"Doctor," Horace said. "We believe you. I promise."

"Know-it-all," Eric mumbled.

"What is her due she asked for?" Yukiko asked.

"Honey," Tigrillo said. "'To all the Gods, honey; to the Mistress of the Labyrinth, honey.' It goes on from there in Linear B..."

"Honey," Horace said with little enthusiasm. "Great. Brigitte, you think you're up for a quick trip into town and back?"

"It's been a busy day for me as quick trips go," she said. "I will if you want, but—"

"No," Yukiko said. "You don't have to. I have some." She dug into the inner pocket of her leather jacket and produced two plastic packets of honey, the kind she was always squeezing into her tea back home.

Horace just blinked at her.

"Words fail me," Tigrillo said.

Yukiko showed a rare smile and immediately shrugged and hid it. "I like this brand. I didn't know if they'd have it here."

"So give it to her then," Eric said.

Yukiko nodded and tore open one of the honey packets. The reflection of the woman's face smiled, and she held up both of her hands just below the surface. Yukiko squeezed the honey out of the packets into the woman's hands, during which the surface of the water didn't so much as ripple. The Mistress of the Labyrinth held her fingertips to her lips and touched them with her tongue. The taste brought a puzzled expression to her face, but she smiled nonetheless and opened her hands wide in a gesture of welcome. She spoke once more, and all eyes turned to Tigrillo for translation.

"Strange," the doctor said.

"What?" Horace asked. "What did she say?"

"She said, 'You are welcome.' But I don't—"

"You do," Brigitte cut in. "You just don't know it yet."

She was already looking around, and as the others did so as well, they realized what Brigitte had just found out. No longer were they standing in the throne room of the palace at Knossos. They were standing around a marble basin in the floor of a marble gazebo overlooking an endless maze out of M. C. Escher's worst nightmares. It rose up around them to all sides as if they sat at the bottom of an enormous sphere.

"Oops," Brigitte said, glancing at Yukiko.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry," Yukiko said, her eyes darting. "I didn't know that would happen."

"Stay calm," Horace said to everyone—himself included. "I have some good news. I think I can see Donnie from here." He pointed up toward some far distant part of the Labyrinth, but whatever he was looking at was too far away from anyone else to make out. "Wait... No. There's s*omebody* there, and he's wearing the Daedalus Device, but it isn't Donnie."

"Who is it?" Eric asked.

Horace shrugged then said, "Now, the bad news. I can hear alarms in the distance. Or, rather, *alarums*."

"What's the difference?"

"One's chiefly British," Doctor Tigrillo offered.

"One only means somebody knows we're here," Horace said. "The other means not only are we busted, whoever knows we're here is coming this way with lots of guys. In a hurry."

"Which one do we have?" Eric asked.

"The one that makes it the bad news," Brigitte said.

Horace nodded toward her and tapped the side of his nose.

When Donnie's eyes opened, reluctantly, he once more took stock of his situation and didn't find it to his liking.

"Damn it," he said, coughing up something terrible from a bruised, raw throat. His voice was barely a squeak. "I am sick and tired of waking up tied to this bed."

The room hadn't changed much since the last time he'd been here. Same frescoes. Same uncomfortable bed frame. Same ropes, though much tighter now. Same sorry smell, though with a faint new odor of blood. Donnie willed his rusty neck to move so he could look at himself. His body was a contour map of bruises, cuts and punctures, and his too-small tunic was a sorry sight indeed. He didn't even want to think what his face looked like, considering how it felt.

"You're not lucky," a high voice said from the opposite side of the bed. "You're not alive because you're lucky."

Donnie turned with great deliberation to find the burned-up boy standing beside his bed, still wearing the purloined wings of the Daedalus Device. He didn't seem to know how to retract them so he could walk around inside with them on. Iapyx stood behind the boy, looking sullen.

"You're alive because I said so," the boy said. "We're going to hurt you every day, but I'm not going to let you die. Forever! How's that sound?"

"Like somebody needs a time-out," Donnie tried to say, making only about half the words come out loud enough to hear. He coughed again and got a hold of himself. When the boy looked in his eyes, Donnie tried his hardest to give the kid one big push. He opened his eyes wide and said in as clear a voice as possible, "Take me back to the Flat World safely."

Any mortal would have done as Donnie asked. Many lesser titanspawn would have fallen all over themselves to carry out his will. Eric Donner would have folded like a wimp with a busted flush. The burned boy just stomped his feet and hollered.

"Don't tell me what to do! I'm the king here! You have to do what I say!"

"Whatever," Donnie wheezed, disappointed. "All I can do is talk, kid. If that makes you mad, go ahead and kill me. Of course, if you do, you don't get to hurt me forever. Either way, I win."

The boy started to say something, but there was nothing to say. He threw up his hands and rounded on his brother instead. "Gag him, Iapyx!"

"I can't," Iapyx said. "He'd choke to death." He didn't look at Donnie when he said it.

"So? We've got the polyidus!"

"It won't bring him back from the dead, Brother," Iapyx said. "I've told you. It can only sustain life, not create it."

"Fine," the boy said. "Fine!" He rounded on Donnie again. "But you better shut up!"

"Sure thing. Just give me back what you stole and send me home. I won't say another word about it."

"I didn't steal anything."

Donnie looked up at the wings poking over the boy's back.

"These are mine!" the boy shrieked. "My dad built them! He's dead now, so they're mine!"

"Father isn't dead," Iapyx said.

"It's close enough!"

"It's not," Donnie croaked. "Your dad works for my mom's husband. He gave them to my mom, and she gave them to me. That makes them mine, pal."

"No they aren't! No they aren't!"

"In fact, your daddy already made you a set—"

"You stop talking! You stop talking!"

"—and you broke it on your first time out, didn't you?"

"No I didn't! No I didn't!" He was practically singing the words now.

"You're not doing the same with these, I guarantee you."

"I can't hear you! I can't hear you!" the boy shouted, squeezing his palms over his ruined ears. "Ba ba ba ba!"

Disgusted with himself and this whole sorry situation, Donnie lay his head back on the bed frame and laughed bitterly. The boy lost his temper and pounded Donnie in the chest. When that didn't make the kid feel better, he kicked and shook the wooden bed frame, hollering "Ba ba ba ba!" at the top of his lungs. All the jostling hurt like hell, but Donnie couldn't stop laughing. Is this what the son of the Goddess of Love, was reduced to?

"Icarus," the boy's brother finally said, laying a hand on the child's shoulder. The kid flinched in pain, and Iapyx's hand came away bloody. "That's enough. He wants you to kill him. Don't."

"They're mine!" Icarus said one last time, breathing hard. "*Mine*." He turned around too fast and knocked Iapyx out of the way with a wing.

"We'll see," Donnie tried to say. The words made no sound.

"I'm going up," Icarus said in Greek, heading for the door. He had to slide out one wing at a time, and if it weren't for many a busted rib, Donnie might have started laughing again. "Keep him alive."

Iapyx nodded, and Icarus left. Donnie and Iapyx stared at each other silently.

"When he showed up at the garden," Donnie said, "you told him I was trying to escape, didn't you?" He was only moving his lips, as he couldn't make sound come out at first, but that was good enough. Iapyx nodded. He didn't even look sorry.

"You should have helped me," Iapyx said. "You shouldn't have mocked the minotaurs. Or me."

Donnie shrugged. It hurt. "Let me ask you something. That mythic realm you found for the others to live in… It's inhabited, isn't it?"

Iapyx looked away, scowling petulantly. "Yes. They all are. They can't exist without their denizens."

"Then I'm not sorry."

"You will be," Iapyx warned.

Donnie had gathered as much. He didn't relish the vengeful minotaurs' exercising their limited sense of irony when they came back. In the meantime, though…

"So," he hissed. "What's this polyidus your brother mentioned?"

"It's an herb," Iapyx said. "It used to grow wild on Crete. Now, this is the only place it grows. The minotaurs tend it. You saw one of their fields."

"It's not a painkiller by chance, is it?"

"It's more than that," Iapyx said. Darkling amusement gave his eyes a sinister cast. "It stops you dying. It preserves you. You can live forever if you keep taking it."

"That's why the minotaurs haven't died out, I take it."

Iapyx nodded.

"And why you're still around." Another nod. "Your brother too."

Iapyx shuddered and hung his head. He nodded, but he couldn't meet Donnie's eyes when he did.

"He's not looking so good, though, is he?"

It occurred to Donnie that that wasn't the wisest thing to say under the circumstances, but Iapyx didn't react to his tone with anger or any other visible emotion. The doctor simply raised his head with a drained, faraway look in his eyes.

"He was already too far gone when I found him. Half drowned, horribly burned, barely clinging to life. I pulled him out of the sea and gave him all the polyidus I had with me. I thought it would cure him, but I didn't understand how it worked back then. But I understand now. If he ever stops taking it, he'll die."

"Boo-hoo," Donnie sneered. "Cry me a ribcage."

"Oh, you'll heal," Iapyx said. "I'll make sure of that. And when you do, we'll start you on the polyidus too so you can spend eternity with us."

"I'll pass."

"You won't. In time, you'll beg me for it. You'll do anything. Even between treatments when we let the minotaurs have their way with you, you'll still beg because the idea of growing old—of dying feeble and alone in bed—is too much for someone like you to face."

Iapyx paused, scowling down at him. At last, he shook his head in disgust. "All you had to do was open one door, and this never would've happened."

"Sorry, pal," Donnie said. "But if I'd opened that door and loosed those monsters on unsuspecting people, I'd deserve everything that's happened to me since I didn't."

Iapyx's eyes narrowed and he opened his mouth to speak, but a noise outside distracted him. It started as a low, whining moan and slowly built into an unearthly wail. Iapyx went out into the hall and looked around. He came back a moment later and lingered in the doorway.

"The watchers have spotted intruders," he said. "I'll be back."

Donnie tried to say something, but he started laughing again, and the wrenching effort brought up a mouthful of blood. He spit it out in an ugly spray.

"What's so funny?"

"If I know who's intruding," Donnie choked out. "You better have a hell of a lot of minotaurs."

"We do," Iapyx said. "Make no mistake."

But behind his calm words, a hint of uncertainty shone deep in Iapyx's eyes. Seeing it gave Donnie the strength to do something he knew would hurt terribly. He took a deep breath, rallying his courage. Deeper... deeper... Bruised and cracked ribs clawed at his lungs. The broken skin across his chest threatened to split. He didn't stop. One good, long breath was all he needed to blast out the crud blocking his throat. When he had it, he crossed his fingers for luck and let it loose before Iapyx could stop him.

"*HORACE!!!*" he bellowed. "*THIS WAY!!!*"

"Get ready," Horace said. Everyone could hear the sound of running feet and raised voices now. So saying, Horace removed his eyepatch and cinched his hat down tight on his head. From beneath his coat he drew his gun in one hand and the Fang of Apep in the other.

Beside him, Eric shrugged the leather satchel off his shoulder and opened it. From within he drew his enormous pistol, Giantbane, and cocked the hammer. Hissing, writhing electricity hung suspended between the firing pin and the bullet.

Doctor Tigrillo likewise set down his medical bag and his gym bag, opening the latter. He took out first a leather-bound shield with an Aztec moon symbol painted on it, then his maquahuitl—a thick club with razor-sharp obsidian edges on either side. The small wound on his right hand opened, and he let the blood run down the length of the weapon.

Yukiko dug in her jacket pocket until she came up with a paper packet no larger than a deck of cards. She held the packet up, squeezed it and called out, "Kusanagi!" The packet disappeared in a puff of white flame to be replaced with the legendary tsurugi sword her father had given her.

Brigitte put on her one-lens ghede glasses and stepped up next to Eric.

The sound of approaching trouble grew steadily louder until the welcoming party finally appeared around the last corner. The Scions, like Donnie had been, were momentarily taken aback at the sight of dozens of albino minotaurs coming toward them, but the creatures' intent was clear enough to put that surprise on the back burner. Standing ahead of the others, Eric and Brigitte nodded to each other and waited for their cues from Horace.

"Brigitte," Horace said first.

Brigitte smiled at the oncoming horde and stomped as hard as she could on the ground. A narrow shock wave skimmed the surface, aimed at the minotaur leading the charge. The wave not only broke one of the creature's legs but hurled him high up in the air over Brigitte's head as if she'd stomped on a seesaw with him on the far side.

"Eric," Horace said.

Brigitte was inhumanly strong, but Eric was even stronger. He leapt forward and struck the ground. He hit it with his bare fist and didn't even try to aim. Knowing what was coming, his fellow Scions all jumped just before Eric's blow landed. The force of his impact sent a tremendous shock wave out in all directions along the floor, and even up the walls. The wave bowled over the entire front rank of minotaurs, tripping up the ones behind them and slowing their charge. A couple of them gored their fellows in the backs as they fell.

Meanwhile, the single minotaur Brigitte had sent flying landed in a heap behind her. Doctor Tigrillo was the first to reach him. A vicious, though nonfatal, blow from his maquahuitl broke the creature's neck. Tigrillo heaved the beast over onto its back and plunged his hand upward through its abdomen, under its ribcage to pull out its still-beating heart. Horace opened fire on those few minotaurs in the first group who were still standing, shooting bolts of pure, concentrated sunlight from his pistol rather than mere bullets. The golden beams left pairs of smoking black holes through the minotaurs' bodies.

"Get back," Eric said to Brigitte, who complied. He fired once with Giantbane, and a blue-white bolt of lightning lanced from the barrel and arced in four different directions. The lightning struck four separate minotaurs and hurled their smoking carcasses back into the minotaurs behind them. Thunder boomed and echoed in the endless tunnels.

Yukiko, who'd stayed back by Horace's side, was the only one to see what Tigrillo was doing. With his club and shield in the same hand, the doctor raised the minotaur's heart in the other hand and somehow stuffed the whole thing into his mouth, bathing

his face in blood. Yukiko made a moue of disgust, but Tigrillo wasn't finished. The doctor pulled open his shirt and jacket and tore the skin beneath as flames leapt up inside him. His eyes and mouth blazed with hellish fires, and only his heart was visible in his empty, blood-spattered ribcage. It too burned, though the doctor didn't seem to be in pain.

"Blood!" Tigrillo yelled in an unearthly loud voice, waving his maquahuitl over his head. "Blood for our fathers!"

"Hell yeah!" Eric hollered, plowing into the midst of the minotaurs. He kicked one in the stomach, cracked another's horns with a blow from Giantbane and knocked three more sprawling with another split bolt of lightning. Beside him, Tigrillo laid into the white horde with equal zeal and abandon. His maquahuitl rose and fell. The pair broke the beasts' charge and drove them back.

"They shouldn't run off," Yukiko said. "They'll get lost."

"If they go too far, they can just follow back the trail they're leaving," Brigitte said.

Between them, Horace looked up suddenly and held up a hand for silence. He'd heard his name, faint but audible to him even over the din of battle. *Horace*, a voice called. *This way*. No mortal would have heard it or been able to pinpoint it, but Horace was no mortal. Brigitte looked at him questioningly.

"Donnie," Horace said. "He's calling. I know where he is. Straight that way." He pointed with the tip of his khopesh. He looked at Yukiko, who was now straining to hear for herself. "You, come with me." Then he looked at Brigitte. "You, stick with them. Don't let them get carried away or get separated. Watch their backs."

"*Bien sur*," Brigitte said. "No problem."

Yukiko reversed the Kusanagi in her hand and nodded her readiness to Horace. Horace holstered his pistol and cinched his hat down even tighter on his head. Then, as one, the two of them leaped out into open air and flew like arrows toward where Donnie's voice had come from.

"Okay then," Brigitte said, standing alone. She walked to the first dead minotaur between her and her two fellow grounded Scions and looked it over through the single lens of her ghede glasses. "Get up, lazybones," she told it. The lifeless form twisted its neck around the right way and hauled itself to its feet. Brigitte smiled. There were a lot of dead minotaurs between herself and where she wanted to be. A lot of living ones too, unless Eric and Tigrillo were really on a roll. She'd get her chance to have some fun yet.

"*Laissez les bons temps rouler*."

Flying over the great maze—cheating, some would say—proved harder than Horace or Yukiko expected. They were both gliding on currents of air, and as gravity shifted around them in accordance with the relative orientation of the floor, it pulled them in unexpected directions, forcing them to correct constantly. It was as treacherous as flying during a category-five hurricane, despite the air's deceptive calm. It took every bit of their concentration to maintain course without getting disoriented or crashing.

As such, neither Horace nor Yukiko saw what hit them. They'd just come in reach of the balcony whence Donnie had first looked out over the Labyrinth, when a winged shape swooped up at them along the invisible edge between two skew gravitational forces. They heard the whoosh of the wings opening, then they were knocked in separate directions. Yukiko regained her balance the quickest, alighting on one foot atop a tall marble spire as thin as a flagpole. Horace got a handful of the attacker's wing, and they swirled away together into the air. The person who'd hit him—a small robed figure who reeked of blood—kicked and scratched and thrashed like a wildcat. He wore Donnie's wings, Horace saw, and he used them as weapons.

"Keep going!" Horace shouted to Yukiko. "The balcony! Find Donnie!" He saw her nod and leap from her perch to the balcony, then a wing hit him across the forehead and nearly knocked his hat off. It was all he could do, as they swung wildly through the air, to keep his attacker away from his throat.

Donnie knew he'd passed out, but he came to as the door of his cell opened and Yukiko Kuromizo stepped through. Her eyes lit up for just as second when she found him, then her entire face became an expressionless mask. She came to his bedside and looked him over once without saying a word.

"Anybody ever teach you to knock?" he whispered, unable to speak any louder.

"No jokes," she said. The mask slipped for a second, and her eyes misted over. "Please." She was back to normal in a blink, but Donnie noticed.

"You look awful," he said. "Everything okay?"

Yukiko's lip trembled.

"I'd pat your head, but I know your people hate big arm movements."

The Kusanagi wavered in her hand, and she had to center herself with a deep breath. Before Donnie could speak again, she leaned over him and spoke in a low, serious voice.

"Once, my father grew very angry at my aunt," she said. "To show this, he tore the skin off her favorite horse and hurled its body through the wall of her sewing room."

"Um…"

"So you shouldn't taunt me when you can tell I'm upset."

Donnie blinked, his jaw hanging open. "Okay."

Unsure what else he could say to something like that, he looked away, just in time to see Iapyx creeping in through the door toward Yukiko. The sneaky bastard held a long metal spike, like an awl or a soil aerator, over his head in one hand. He rushed across the room in three quick, quiet steps, aiming the weapon for the base of Yukiko's neck.

Yukiko didn't turn around. In one motion, she stood up, reversed the Kusanagi and drove it straight backward without looking. The blade went up to the hilt in Iapyx's midsection. Yukiko withdrew it, spun around and both cut off his weapon hand and slashed him across the chest in two quick cuts. The Greek staggered backward in surprise and ran into the wall, leaving a bloody smear there. Yukiko kicked his fallen hand aside and flicked his blood off her blade. Iapyx gasped once in shock and lurched out of the room, dribbling a crimson trail. Yukiko turned back toward Donnie.

"Shit," Donnie whispered.

Yukiko cut him loose and helped him sit up, which Donnie appreciated more than he knew how to say. He put an arm around her shoulders, trying not to get too much blood in her glossy, black hair. She helped him limp back toward the balcony.

"How did you find me?" he asked.

"Horace heard you shout."

They reached the balcony, where she helped him to the rail. Looking out over the dizzying expanse, he saw Horace twisting and thrashing in the air, trying to keep Icarus at bay. Horace had his khopesh in one hand, but he had no leverage to use it.

"Yukiko," Donnie said. "Lend me the Kusanagi a second." He hated to do it after she'd come all this way and freed him, but he gave her a push when he said it. He didn't need any arguments.

"Of course," she said, handing it over.

Donnie let her go and used the winds the blade commanded to lift himself into the air just as Yukiko realized what he'd made her do. Flying with the Kusanagi wasn't like using the Daedalus Device, though—it was more like hanging on for dear life with the last of his fading strength. Fortunately, he didn't have very far to go. He slammed into Icarus's back, sending the pair of them and Horace tumbling randomly in a new direction. Icarus screamed in pain and surprise, and Horace brought his khopesh down to strike at last. Donnie reached over Icarus's shoulder and knocked the blade aside with the Kusanagi.

"Wait!" he said. "He's just a kid!"

Horace checked himself and flew back a few feet now that he'd gotten free. The kid still thrashed and screamed, but Donnie had a hold of him. Now that he could see his attacker clearly, Horace looked horrified at what he'd almost done.

"Let go of me!" Icarus screamed.

"Sure thing," Donnie said. He grabbed the Daedalus Device in the center of the mechanism and kicked Icarus as hard as he could in the small of the back. Recognizing its true master, the device loosed its buckles and harnesses automatically and let Icarus go. The child tumbled away from Horace and Donnie, but not toward the nearest ground. Instead, Donnie had kicked him out and away toward the center of the space between all of the Labyrinth's tunnels, falling first one way then another as opposing gravitational forces toyed with him. He disappeared into the distance shrieking for his father.

Still clinging to the Kusanagi with one hand, Donnie awkwardly worked himself halfway into the harness of the Daedalus Device and finished putting it on with Horace's help. When he cinched down the last strap, the wild winds from the Kusanagi died down, and he and Horace hovered in place.

"You intend to scold me for what I just did?" Donnie asked.

"You going to hold my taking so long to find you against me?" Horace asked.

Donnie laughed. It didn't feel good. "We'll call it a wash."

An hour later, the reunited Scions had all gathered around the marble basin where they'd entered the Labyrinth. They'd seen no sign of Icarus or Iapyx in all that time, and if there were more minotaurs on the loose, the beasts wisely kept their distance. The reanimated bodies of several dead ones stood on guard around the marble gazebo at Brigitte's command just in case.

Weak and weary, Donnie lay on the cool stone as Yukiko prepared to contact the spirit that had brought them here. Doctor Tigrillo, unusually somber now that the fighting was over, had cleaned himself up and bound Donnie's wounds as best he was able with what he had on hand. He neglected to produce Donnie's pistols from his gym bag just at the moment. The others kept out of the way and—except for the occasional relieved smiles they turned his way—didn't embarrass Donnie with a lot of celebrating or excessive mothering. They just stayed close and kept an eye on him, which Donnie had always appreciated more than a lot of fuss.

"Hey, guys?" he said. His voice had come back somewhat, but it was still ragged and scratchy. The others gathered around him. "I hardly know how to say this, but I want you all to hear it and know I mean it." He swallowed, and it went down rough.

"Go ahead," Horace said.

"Okay." He looked around at the faces of his five closest friends—his family, really. "The next time Horace suggests we go traipsing all over the World looking for our parents, everybody tell him to go to Hell, okay?"

"Ha!" Eric cawed. "Unbelievable!"

Yukiko giggled and went back to what she was doing.

"You're welcome," Horace said. "Smart-ass."

"I think he's feeling better," Tigrillo said with a wry grin.

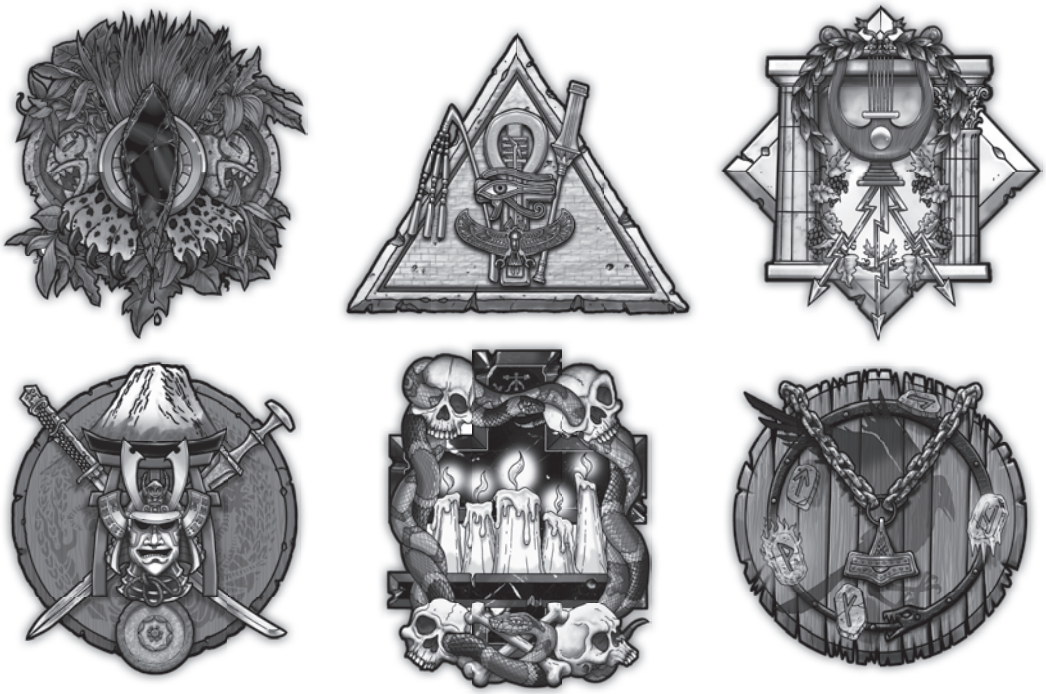
"He is *now*," Brigitte said, winking. "Wait 'til he sees what happened to his hotel suite."

"Yeah, and his guns," Eric added.

"Huh?" Donnie's eyes widened. "What the heck happened to my guns?"

SCION™

DEMIGOD



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WHITE WOLF PUBLISHING
1554 LITTON DR
STONE MOUNTAIN, GA
30083
USA

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PRINTED IN CANADA

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BOOK ONE
PLAYER

DEMIGOD

As evinced in **Scion: Hero**, the life of a heroic Scion is one fraught with equal parts excitement and danger. And as a Scion's Legend grows, it only gets worse, as the hero's own Fateful Aura draws conflict to him like a moth to a candle-flame, always threatening to consume him in the ensuing conflagration. By the time the Scion reaches Legend 5, things get deadly serious. Just by dint of his growing Legend coupled with its concomitant increase in power and his obvious knack for survival, the Scion comes to the attention of the more powerful servants of the Titans as an up-and-comer who needs to be eliminated. The Scion graduates from fighting cultists and mummies to fending off assaults by basilisks and colossi. Even a hero would be unlikely to survive the concerted efforts of the titanspawn to eliminate him.

Luckily for the Legend 5 Scion, he's become more than a mere hero. He's now a demigod. What does that mean exactly? Quite a lot, in fact.

As he grows in Legend and power, a Scion's nature changes. More ichor infuses his form to power the changes in his supernatural physiology and fuel his increasingly puissant Boons. At Legend 5, it reaches a tipping point, where the Scion is formed more of divine ichor than mortal flesh—more God than man. A demigod. As he reaches this plateau, his demigod body sheds a number of its human frailties, allowing the Scion to raise his mundane Attributes beyond 5, though they may never surpass his Legend.

In recognition of her Scion's accomplishment, it is typical for the divine parent to shower her child with Boons and Birthrights. By making it to demigodhood, the child has proven to be an asset worth cultivating in this divine conflict, one who, effectively armed, can make a significant difference in the outcome of the Overworld War. Any God would be remiss in not optimizing and utilizing such an effective living weapon.

Within the context of the game, this is effectively a rationale for the implementation of the demigod upgrade template, which boosts a number of the Scion's traits, both magic and mundane. The upgrade template is as follows:

DEMIGOD UPGRADE SUMMARY

- STEP ONE: ATTRIBUTES

  Prioritize the three categories: Physical, Social, Mental (4/3/2)

  Upgrade Physical Traits: Strength, Dexterity, Stamina

  Upgrade Social Traits: Charisma, Manipulation, Appearance

  Upgrade Mental Traits: Perception, Intelligence, Wits

- STEP TWO: EPIC ATTRIBUTES AND BOONS

  Choose Epic Attributes and Boons (10)

- STEP THREE: BIRTHRIGHTS

  Choose Birthrights (5)

- STEP FOUR: BONUS POINTS

  Bonus points (15) may be spent to upgrade any trait (see the bonus point cost on p. 101 of **Scion: Hero**)

In upgrading your character, you need not prioritize his Attribute categories the same way you did when you built the character. If, for instance, you focused on Physical Attributes at character creation but left Social Attributes as your third priority, you can balance out that discrepancy at this stage. Or you can focus your new trait dots on your character's strongest Attribute category to make him extremely good in a narrow range of activities.

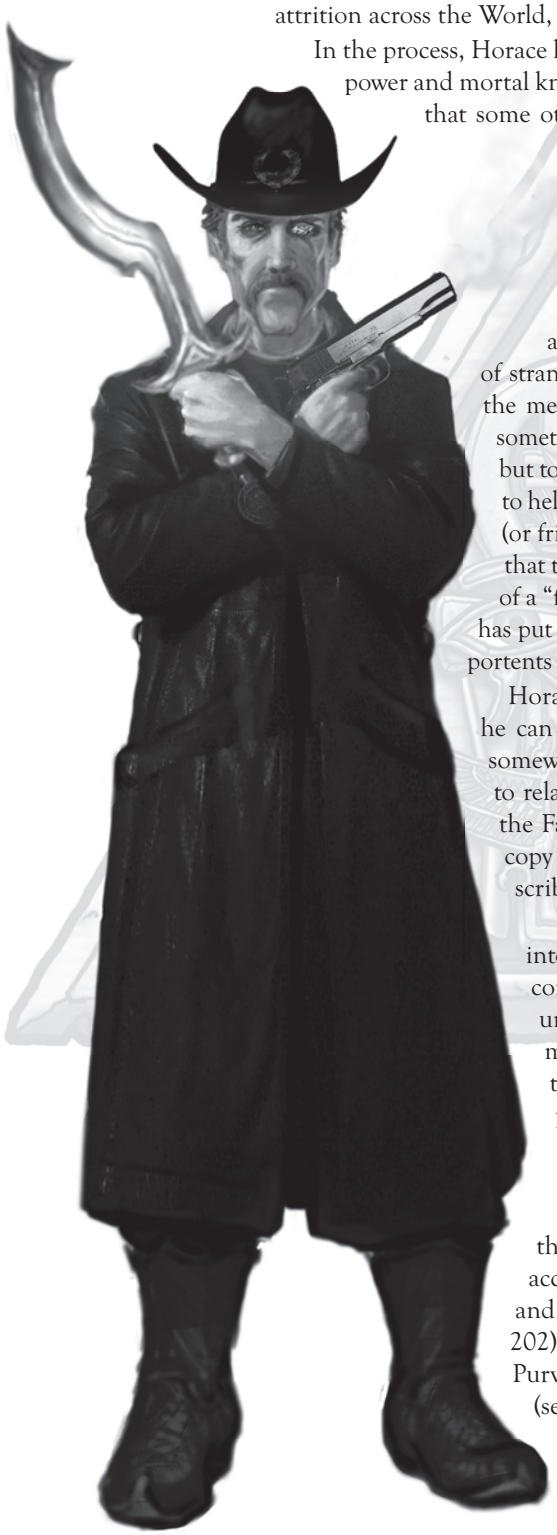
Note also that the upgrade in Epic Attributes and Boons is listed in terms of how many *dots* you get for free, not how many individual powers you get. Powerful demigod-level Boons from all-purpose Purviews can significantly eat into this new pool of free dots.

The same goes for Birthrights. Demigods receive five new points worth of Birthrights, not five new relics or creatures or what have you. You can upgrade an existing relic with more dots, but only to a maximum Birthright rating of five points.

THE DEMIGODS

What follows are the pregenerated signature characters from **Scion: Hero**, now become demigods. In addition to having the demigod template applied to them, they've also been upgraded using a total of 150 experience points, to represent the time and effort expended to reach this point in their development. These Scions' rivals in the Shinsengumi (see pp. 292-298) have had the same amount of experience applied to them.

HORACE FARROW
SCION OF HORUS



Horace Farrow has led his Band through many dangerous situations and brought them all through (reasonably) unscathed. Given the intensity of fighting and Scion attrition across the World, that's quite a remarkable achievement.

In the process, Horace has grown into a demigod with a wide range of supernatural power and mortal know-how. As a result, though, he lacks the extremes of power that some other members of the Band have. He has some manner of proficiency in whatever is called for in a particular situation, allowing him to back up the others in their chosen areas of expertise or to stand in for them to some degree. It's this versatility that makes him so effective as a leader and a warrior.

In addition, although the World as a whole has yet to accept that there's any rhyme or reason to the metric shit ton of strange occurrences that have been reported and glossed over by the media, law-enforcement agencies in the US have realized that something's up. This is due not only to the agencies' own diligence but to the fact that Horace has shown up on a number of occasions to help out officers who were in over their heads. As a result, friends (or friends of friends) who are still in law enforcement are learning that they can call on Horace when weird crap pops up. In the guise of a "freelance consultant" to various government agencies, Horace has put his Band on the trail of titanspawn activity almost as often as portents and divine messengers have.

Horace continues to tool around on his Indian Chief whenever he can arrange it, even when the Band as a whole needs to get somewhere. It leaves him alone with his thoughts and helps him to relax. In addition to the Eye of Horus, the Fang of Apep and the Falcon Amulet, Horace has been gifted by his father with a copy of *The Book of Going Forth By Day* (see **Scion: Hero**, pp. 164) scribed by the God Thoth himself.

Roleplaying Hints: Since the Band formed, you've grown into your role as leader. Always a skilled tactician, your command ability has only increased as you've come to better understand the capabilities (and weaknesses) of your Bandmates. Though still driven to bring your uncle, Seth Farrow, to justice, you've also begun to better appreciate the bigger picture of the Overworld War and are more willing to put vengeance on the back burner until the war is won. Most days, anyway.

Birthrights: The Eye of Horus gives Horace access to the Moon and Sun Purviews. The Falcon Amulet lets Horace access the Sky Purview. The Fang of Apep adds Accuracy +1 and Damage +1L to the khopesh template (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 202). *The Book of Going Forth By Day* offers access to the Magic Purview and possesses the ability to transport its owner to Duat (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 164, and pp. 144-152 for more details on the book's powers and Duat). The relic also presents the incantations necessary to ease one's passage through the Egyptian underworld (see p. 150)

SCION
DEMIGOD

Horace Farrow (Name)	Peace Officer (Calling)	Pesedjet (Pantheon)
(Player)	Architect (Nature)	Horus (God)

HORACE FARROW

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●○○○○○○○	Charisma	●●●●○○○○○○	Perception	●●●●●○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●○○○○○○○	Manipulation	●●○○○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●●○○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●●○○○○○○	Appearance	●●○○○○○○○○	Wits	●●●●○○○○○○

ABILITIES

□ Academics	○○○○○	□ Craft	●○○○○	■ Melee	●●●○○
□ Animal Ken	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Occult	○○○○○
□ Art	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	■ Politics	●○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	●○○○○	□ Presence	●●●○○
■ Athletics	●●●○○	□ Fortitude	●●●○○	□ Science (Forensics)	●○○○○
■ Awareness	●●●●○	□ Integrity	●●●○○	□	○○○○○
■ Brawl	●●○○○	□ Investigation	●●●●○	□	○○○○○
■ Command	●●●●○	□ Larceny	●●○○○	□ Stealth	●●○○○
□ Control (Motorcycles)	●●○○○	□ Marksmanship	●●●○○	□ Survival	●●○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	●○○○○	□ Thrown	○○○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Relic (The Book of Going Forth by Day–Magic) 5
Relic (Eye of Horus–Moon, Sun) 2
Relic (Falcon Amulet–Sky) 1
Relic (Fang of Apep) 2

WEAPONS

Khopesh (Fang of Apep)
Acc 8, Dmg 10L, Parry DV 5, Sp 4

Colt .45
Acc 9, Dmg 5L, Rng 20, Clip 8, Sp 5, P

KNACKS

Benefit of the Doubt, Body Armor, Broad-Spectrum Reception, Charmer, Crowd Control, Damage Conversion, Enviromental Awareness, Eternal Vigilance, Holy Bound, Instant Investigator, Opening Gambit, Predatory Focus, Regeneration, Self-Healing, Subliminal Warning, Supernal Hunter, Unimpeachable Reference

BOONS

Divine Radiance, Eclipse Halo, Flare Missle, Heavenly Flare, Penetrating Glare, Ren Harvest, Sekem Barrier, Sekem Blaze, Sky's Grace, Smoking Mirror, Tidal Interference

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●●○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A 3 L 8 B 10

ARMOR

Bulletproof vest
A ____ L 2 B 2

EXPERIENCE

150

VIRTUES

Conviction	●●●○○
Harmony	●●○○○
Order	●●●○○
Piety	●○○○○

LEGEND

●●●●●●
○○○○○○
36 Legend Pts

HEALTH

0	0	0	0	0	0	I
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■	■	■	■	■	■	
	■	■	■	■		

HORACE FARROW

DONNIE RHODES
SCION OF APHRODITE

Donnie Rhodes has grown a lot as a person since first joining up with the Band. Once only a neglected rich kid acting out to garner attention, Donnie has found true friendship and support from his Band (especially in kindred spirit Yukiko). As a result, he's embraced his heroic nature, though he still has lapses and still plays that part reluctantly as a matter of habit.

Even as a demigod, Donnie continues to eschew the flashier Boons, concentrating on the improvement of his semidivine form through increased Epic Attributes and Arete instead. Doing so makes him ideal for stealth missions and operations that require charm and guile rather than overwhelming force.

Donnie continues to use his family's considerable wealth to finance the Band's adventures, a matter that has further strained his relationship with his estranged father, who has threatened to cut off his son's funds if he continues to blow it traveling the World with his motley "entourage."

Donnie still bears his twin relic pistols and the Daedalus Device, and now, he's been gifted with a guide by his mother, his own half brother, the God Indiges—better known as the Trojan hero and Roman progenitor Aeneas. To contact the God, Donnie must merely touch a bust of the warrior provided him by his mother and expend a point of Legend.

Roleplaying Hints: You continue to strive to be better than your parents, but the morally gray divine nature of your mother and the neglectful nurture of your mortal father still lead you to make regretful choices at times. Luckily, you fell in with a Band of Scions who emphasize doing the right thing for the right reasons, which was a bit of a wake-up call. You hope to one day be as selfless as Eric or little Yukiko, but until then, you'll at least be there for your friends when they need you.

Birthrights: The Daedalus Device allows Donnie to channel the Sky, Animal and Sun Purviews and adds +2 to his DVs as if he possessed a pair of independently mobile shields. Eros and Anteros are Berettas—the former gold, the latter matte gunmetal—each fitted for a silencer and adding Accuracy +1 and Speed -1 to the template (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 203) and each also possessing a unique power.

When Donnie activates its power and shoots someone with Eros, his victim suffers no damage but falls madly in love with the next person she sees. (The attack must still succeed as per a normal attack with a pistol, and a bullet is still used. This bullet's passing and impact leaves no physical sign, however.) If Donnie activates Anteros's power instead and shoots a person with it, the victim develops a deep hatred toward the next person she sees.

Activating either power requires spending a Legend point, as well as making a successful (Charisma + Presence + Legend) roll. The victim—who doesn't feel the impact from the shot and might not even realize he's been targeted—resists with (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). If Donnie's player scores more successes, the love or hate effect lasts for a number of days equal to the number of successes he scored in excess of his victim.

Donnie also now possesses a bust of the famed Trojan Scion Aeneas, which allows him to contact his half brother and guide, now deified as Indiges.

SCION
DEMIGOD

Donnie Rhodes	N'er-Do-Well	Dodekatheon
Name	Calling	Pantheon
	Cynic	Aphrodite
Player	Nature	God

DONNIE RHODES

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○○○○○○	Charisma	●●●●●○○○○○	Perception	●●●●○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●●○○○○○○	Manipulation	●●●●○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●●○○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●○○○○○○○	Appearance	●●●●●●○○○○	Wits	●●●●●○○○○○

ABILITIES

☐ Academics	●●●○○	☐ Craft	○○○○○	☐ Melee	○○○○○
■ Animal Ken	●●○○○	☐	○○○○○	☐ Occult	○○○○○
■ Art	●○○○○	☐	○○○○○	☐ Politics	●●○○○
☐	○○○○○	■ Empathy	●●○○○	■ Presence	●●●●○
☐ Athletics	●●●○○	☐ Fortitude	○○○○○	☐ Science (Psychology)	●●○○○
☐ Awareness	●●●○○	■ Integrity	●●●○○	☐	○○○○○
☐ Brawl	●●○○○	☐ Investigation	○○○○○	☐	○○○○○
☐ Command	○○○○○	■ Larceny	●●○○○	☐ Stealth	○○○○○
☐ Control (Automobiles)	●●●○○	☐ Marksmanship	●●●●○	☐ Survival	○○○○○
☐	○○○○○	☐ Medicine	○○○○○	☐ Thrown	○○○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Guide (Indiges) 5
Relic (Bust of Aeneas) 1
Relic (Daedalus Device—Animal, Sky, Sun) 5
Relic (Eros/Anteros) 4

WEAPONS

Eros/Anteros
Acc 10, Dmg 4L, Rng 20, Clip 15, Spd 3, P

KNACKS

Blinding Visage, Blurt It Out,
Center of Attention, Come Hither,
Holy Fortitude, Knowing Glance,
My Eyes Are Up Here,
Overt Order, Pied Piper,
Rabbit Reflexes, Rumor Mill,
Trick Shooter, Untouchable Opponent

BOONS

Animal Feature (Bird),
Arete (Integrity) 1,
Arete (Marksmanship) 5,
Arete (Presence) 5,
Penetrating Glare,
Wind's Freedom

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●●○○○
☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

SOAK

A 1 L 3 B 4

ARMOR

A____ L____ B____

EXPERIENCE

150

VIRTUES

Expression	●○○○○
Intellect	●○○○○
Valor	●●●○○
Vengeance	●●●●○

LEGEND

●●●●●●
●○○○○○

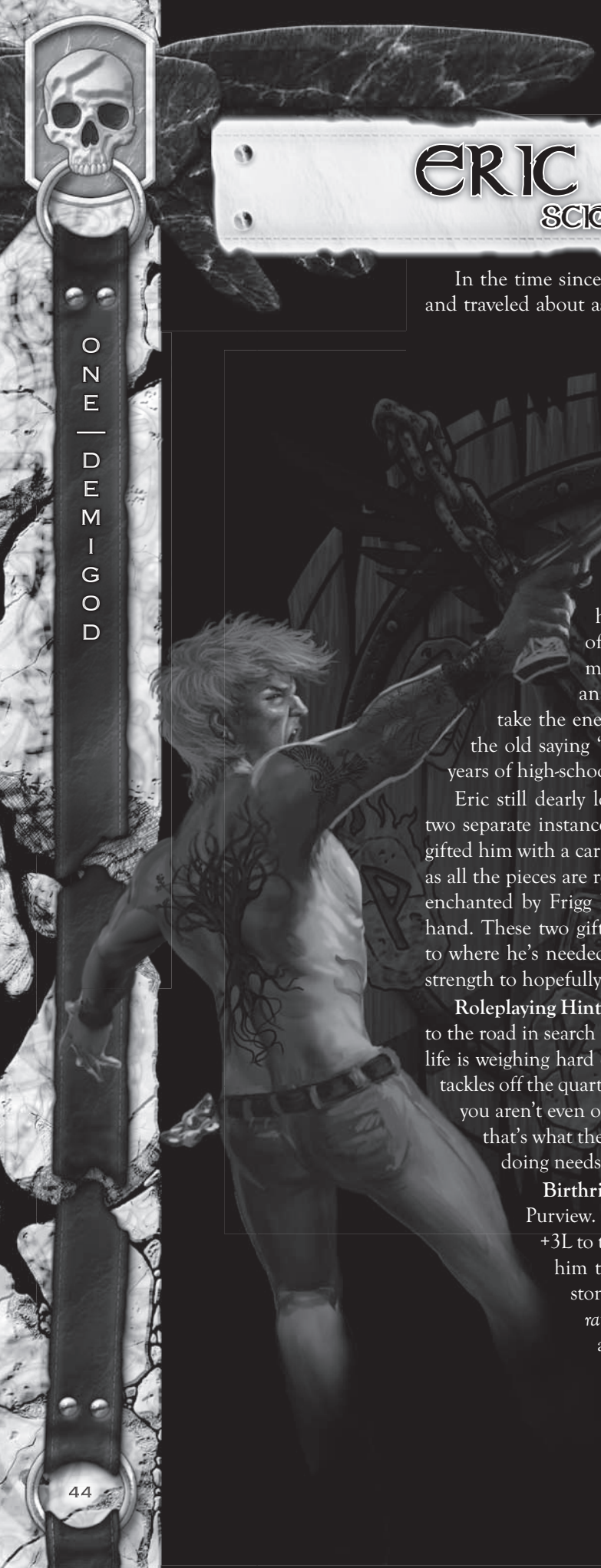
49 Legend Pts

HEALTH

0	0	0	-2	-2	-4	I
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	
	■	■	■	■		

DONNIE RHODES

Eric Donner
Scion of Thor



In the time since his Visitation, Eric Donner has fought giants and demigods and traveled about as far from home as it's possible for a soul to go. But in many ways, he's still the same likeable gearhead he was when he left, just with a bit more muscle and a mite more hair. It's this unflappable character and affable nature that so endears him to the others in his Band. Just like with his father, it's almost impossible not to love the guy. Which is good, because he definitely needs someone to watch his back.

Eric's all about offense. With his incredible strength and his destructive Boons, he's the backbone of any assault his Band makes. Of course, this all belies the Norse Scion's fear of losing his new family and his worry that he could join his lost mother and grandfather in death at any time. To stave off such an eventuality, he's specialized in those divine traits he feels will take the enemy down, and fast. After all, his old coach practically drilled the old saying "The best defense is a good offense" into his skull over three years of high-school football.

Eric still dearly loves the old GTO he and his grandfather rebuilt, and after two separate instances where it was practically totaled, his allies Brok and Sindri gifted him with a car cover that allows the goat to recover from any damage as long as all the pieces are recovered. Also, his father presented him with a rune necklace enchanted by Frigg herself designed to ensure his pistol Giantbane is always at hand. These two gifts serve to make sure that he remains armed and able to get to where he's needed, while Giantbane and his *algiz* ring add to his considerable strength to hopefully guarantee victory.

Roleplaying Hints: It seems like forever since your grandfather died and you took to the road in search of answers. You try to put on a strong face all the time, but this life is weighing hard on you. Not long ago, all you had to worry about was keeping tackles off the quarterback, and now, you have to keep giants out of the World. And you aren't even old enough to drink yet. Still, you put up a tough front, because that's what the others need to see. You're the muscle after all, and what you're doing needs doing, so you'll freak out later… if you live that long.

Birthrights: Eric's bloodstone ring allows him to channel the Guardian Purview. Giantbane is an oversized supernal Peacemaker. It adds Damage +3L to the Peacemaker template (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 203). It also allows him to channel the Sky Purview. Eric's necklace contains two rune stones—one carved with the rune *odal,* the other with the rune *raidô*. This relic allows Eric to summon his pistol to his hand from any distance. He also possesses a car cover that allows his car to regenerate from any damage. As long as he gathers all the pieces of his GTO together under the cover, the car will be rendered whole again with the dawning of the sun on the following day. Any pieces missing will not be replaced by the relic's magic, which means little in the case of a missing taillight, but a whole lot more in the case of a missing carburetor.

SCION
DEMIGOD

Name	Calling	Pantheon
Eric Donner	Athlete	Aesir
Player	**Nature**	**God**
	Gallant	Thor

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●●●●●○○○	Charisma	●●●●●○○○○○	Perception	●●●○○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●○○○○○○○	Manipulation	●●○○○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●●○○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●●●○○○○○	Appearance	●●●●●○○○○○	Wits	●●●●○○○○○○

ABILITIES

□ Academics	○○○○○	□ Craft (Automobiles)	●●○○○	■ Melee	●●○○○
□ Animal Ken	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Occult	○○○○○
□ Art	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	●●●○○	■ Presence	●●○○○
■ Athletics	●●●●○	□ Fortitude	●●○○○	□ Science	○○○○○
□ Awareness	●●○○○	□ Integrity	○○○○○	□	○○○○○
■ Brawl	●●●●○	□ Investigation	●○○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Command	●○○○○	□ Larceny	○○○○○	□ Stealth	●○○○○
■ Control (Automobiles)	●●●○○	□ Marksmanship	●●●○○	□ Survival	●●○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	○○○○○	■ Thrown	●●○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Relic (Aegis Ring-Guardian) 1
Relic (Car Cover) 2
Relic (Giantbane-Sky) 4
Relic (Rune-Stone Necklace) 3

WEAPONS

Giantbane
Acc 8, Dmg 8L, Rng 20, Clip 6, Spd 5, P

KNACKS

Crushing Grip, Damage Conversion, Holy Rampage, Hurl to the Horizon, Knockback Attack, Mighty Heave, Self-Healing, Shock Wave, Uplifting Might

BOONS

Aegis, Levin Fury, Storm Augmentation, Tornado Tamer, Vigil Brand

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●●○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A 2 L 5 B 7

ARMOR

A____ L____ B____

EXPERIENCE

150

VIRTUES

Courage	●●●○○
Endurance	●●●○○
Expression	●○○○○
Loyalty	●●○○○

LEGEND

●●●●●●
●●○○○○

64 Legend Pts

HEALTH

0	0	0	0	0	-4	I
□	□	□	□	□	□	□
■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	
	■	■	■	■		

ERIC DONNER

ERIC DONNER

DR. AARON TIGRILLO
SCION OF TEZCATLIPOCA

Aaron Tigrillo still venerates the Gods of his people—his father, Tezcatlipoca, most of all—but doing so is no longer truly a matter of faith for him. He knows that, to beat the Titans, the Atzlánti deities require blood sacrifice—it's an objective fact. Yet he's now experienced the pettiness of the Aztec Gods, and he sometimes wonders how much is really required to properly run the World and carry out the Overworld War, and how much is wasted on petty internal rivalries and with petulant feuds with the Gods of the other pantheons. Still, his faith remains. Faith in his shared mission to protect the World from the destructive Titans and their spawn... and faith in his Band.

Still martyr, priest and prophet for the Atzlánti, Tigrillo focuses his considerable talent on mastering the gifts of sacrifice, magic and foresight. As a consequence of this specialty and his vast intelligence, the good doctor's typically consulted by Horace while planning the Band's operations, and the Pesedjet Scion's come to appreciate Dr. Tigrillo's second opinion.

Tigrillo still tends to affect the dress of a well-to-do doctor when appropriate, but as the Band begins to travel to more exotic and out-of-the-way locales, many with no ties to the modern World, he more often comes to blend functional modern dress with Aztec accents, more openly displaying his pantheon affiliation. Therefore, while still carrying his scalpels, when in battle, he's ever more likely to bear his maquahuitl and the Xiuhichimalli, a relic shield given him by his father upon his "graduation" to demigodhood. He continues to rely on the advice and access to Purviews the Crystal Skull provides.

Roleplaying Hints: Having spent a fair amount of time with your Band, and having seen the pettiness of your own divine parent, you are less willing to sacrifice either your Band-mates or yourself on the Gods' say-so. The quickness with which you and the others have gained power is proof to you that Scions should be cultivated and allowed to fully blossom, rather than flung under the feet of the titanspawn to slow them down while the Gods bicker and dither. You still respect the wisdom of the Smoking Mirror, but you suspect it's time for you to choose the manner of sacrifice you're willing to make rather than leaving that up to Tezcatlipoca.

Birthright: Doctor Tigrillo's Crystal Skull relic allows him to channel his Magic, Mystery and Prophecy Purviews. It can also speak to him, offering him sage advice and counsel. Tigrillo also possesses Xiuhichimalli, a shield that affords him a +6 DV bonus (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 164).

SCION
DEMIGOD

Dr. Aaron Tigrillo	Surgeon	Atelánti
Name	Calling	Pantheon
	Traditionalist	Tezcatlipoca
Player	Nature	God

AARON TIGRILLO

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○○○○○○	Charisma	●●●○○○○○○○	Perception	●●●●●○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●○○○○○○○	Manipulation	●●●●○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●●●●●○○○○
Stamina	●●●●○○○○○○	Appearance	●●●●●○○○○○	Wits	●●●○○○○○○○

ABILITIES

□ Academics	●●●○○	□ Craft	○○○○○	□ Melee	●●○○○
□ Animal Ken	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	■ Occult	●●●●○
□ Art	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	○○○○○	■ Presence	●●●●○
■ Athletics	●●●○○	■ Fortitude	●●●●○	□ Science (Pharmacology)	●●●○○
□ Awareness	●●○○○	□ Integrity	●●○○○	□	○○○○○
■ Brawl	●●○○○	□ Investigation	○○○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Command	○○○○○	□ Larceny	○○○○○	■ Stealth	●●○○○
□ Control (Automobiles)	●○○○○	□ Marksmanship	○○○○○	□ Survival	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	●●●●○	□ Thrown	●●○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Guide (Crystal Skull) 4
Relic (Crystal Skull-Magic, Mystery, Prophecy) 4
Relic (Xiuhtichimalli) 5

WEAPONS

Obsidian Scalpel: Acc 6, Dmg 4L, Parry DV –, Spd 4
(thrown) Acc 5, Dmg 4L, Rng 15, Spd 4
Maquahuitl: Acc 5, Dmg 6L/B, Parry DV 5, Spd 5
Tepatopilli: Acc 5, Dmg 7L, Parry DV 5, Spd 5

KNACKS

Blurt It Out, Cat's Grace,
Cipher, Damage Conversion,
Holy Fortitude, Instant Assessment,
Know-It-All, Language Mastery,
Meditative Focus, Multitasking,
Ricochet Symphony, Serpent's Gaze

BOONS

The Burning Heart, Combat
Sacrifice, Maguey Sting, Magic 4,
Mystery 2, Obsidian Excruciation,
Obsidian Mutilation, Poco a Poco,
Prophecy 3, Sacrifice of Will,

Spells: Deus Ex Machina, Evil Eye,
Fateful Connection, The Unlidded Eye

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●○○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A 2 L 4 B 6

ARMOR

A____ L____ B____

EXPERIENCE

150

VIRTUES

Conviction	●●●○○
Courage	●●○○○
Duty	●●○○○
Loyalty	●●○○○

LEGEND

●●●●●●
●●○○○○

64 Legend Pts

HEALTH

0	0	0	0	0	-4	I
□	□	□	□	□	□	□
■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	
	■	■	■	■		

AARON TIGRILLO

YUKIKO KUROMIZU
SCION OF SUSANO-O

Yukiko Kuromizu has shed a lot of her initial naïveté in the time she's spent with her Band. War does that to a person. On the upside, she's also found true friends for the first time in her life, and the camaraderie she feels with them makes all the other craziness and violence worthwhile (most days anyway). Donnie in particular intrigues her, as he came from such a different background and yet their lives, and their pain, are so similar.

In combat, Yukiko is all about speed, finesse and surprise, and as a demigod, her ability is frightening to behold. Additionally, her mastery of the Water Purview not only allows her unexpected ways of entrance and egress from any conflict, but gives her a number of tricks she can pull out unexpectedly in combat to turn the tide, as it were. Also adding to her repertoire of off-the-wall techniques are her Tsukumo-Gami Boons, allowing her to pull weapons or even a motorcycle seemingly from nowhere or to talk her way through locked doors or enhance her sword's capabilities.

Yukiko continues to wield the famed Kusanagi, and her father has also gifted her with the Yasakani no Magatama, another relic that has belonged to both Susano-o and his sister, Amaterasu. (It's the second of the Three Sacred Treasures of Japan to come into Yukiko's possession.) She continues to enjoy the freedom afforded her while riding motorcycles. Her latest bike, gifted to her by a grateful CEO after Yukiko saved his life, is a tricked-out Honda Interceptor. Eric helped switch out its gas tank with the trophy from a slain Horseman, so the bike no longer needs fuel to run.

Roleplaying Hints: Though still a bit shy, you've become more comfortable around the members of your Band (except maybe Donnie). Occasionally, you let a bit of your wry sense of humor slip through, leaving the others to wonder if a joke was intended or if the joke's elements merely came together through happenstance. This amuses you to no end. Given your reserved demeanor, your highly efficient, if brutal, combat style still sometimes catches those who know you off guard.

Birthrights: The Kusanagi adds Accuracy +1 and Damage +1 to the spatha template (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 202) and allows Yukiko to channel the Sky and Water Purviews. It also has a unique power that allows Yukiko to strike a distant target without having to close that distance. This attack shares the combat traits of a close-combat attack with the Kusanagi, but Yukiko cannot parry with it. She can attack a target out to a distance of (Legend x 5) yards. The Yasakani no Magatama provides access to the Fertility, Sun, War and Water Purviews. Her trophy gas tank allows her motorcycle to run without fuel.

SCION
DEMIGOD

Yukiko Kuromizu Name	Photographer Calling	Amatsukami Pantheon
 Player	Visionary Nature	Susano-o God

YUKIKO KUROMIZU

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●○○○○○○○	Charisma	●●●○○○○○○○	Perception	●●●○○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●●●●○○○○	Manipulation	●●●○○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●●○○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●●○○○○○○	Appearance	●●●○○○○○○○	Wits	●■○○○○○○○○

ABILITIES

□ Academics	●●○○○	■ Craft (Oragami)	●○○○○	■ Melee	●●●●●
□ Animal Ken	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Occult	●●○○○
□ Art (Photography)	●●●○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	○○○○○	■ Presence	●○○○○
□ Athletics	●●●○○	■ Fortitude	●●○○○	□ Science (Chemistry)	●○○○○
■ Awareness	●●●●○	□ Integrity	●●○○○	□	○○○○○
■ Brawl	●●●●○	□ Investigation	●○○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Command	○○○○○	□ Larceny	●○○○○	□ Stealth	○○○○○
□ Control (Motorcycles)	●○○○○	□ Marksmanship	○○○○○	□ Survival	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	○○○○○	□ Thrown	●●○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Guide (Kono) 4
Relic (Gas Tank) 1
Relic (Kusanagi—Sky, Water) 5
Relic (Yasakani no Magatama—Fertility, Sun, War, Water) 4

WEAPONS

Kusanagi: Acc 13, Dmg 10L, Parry DV 17, Spd 4
(ranged) Acc 13, Dmg 10L, Parry DV —, Spd 4

KNACKS

Cat's Grace, Divine Balance, Lightning Sprinter, Rabbit Reflexes, Untouchable Opponent, Whirlwind Shield

BOONS

Battle Cry, Changing States, The Helpful Spirit, The Impressed Spirit, Sky's Grace, The Summoned Spirit, The Wakeful Spirit, Warrior Ideal (Onna Bugeisha), The Watchful Spirit, Water Breathing, Water Control, Water Mastery

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●●○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A____ L 2 B 6

ARMOR

Biker Gear
A____ L 0 B 2

EXPERIENCE

150

VIRTUES

Duty	●●○○○
Endurance	●●○○○
Intellect	●●○○○
Valor	●●●○○

LEGEND

●●●●●●
●○○○○○
49 Legend Pts

HEALTH

0	-1	-1	-2	-2	-4	I
□	□	□	□	□	□	□
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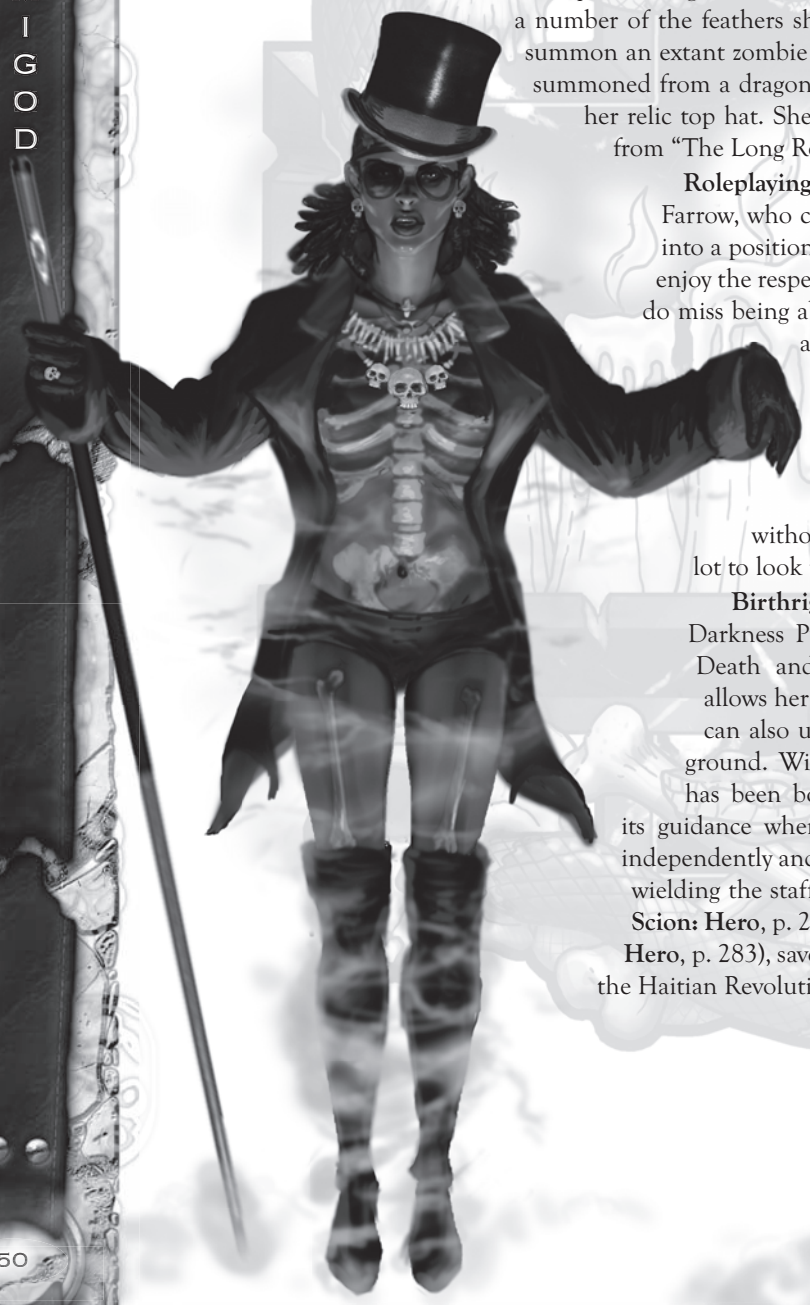
YUKIKO KUROMIZU

BRIGITTE DE LA CROIX
SCION OF BARON SAMEDI



Brigitte De La Croix has survived the worst the World's titanspawn can throw at her, and she's come out smiling. In the process, she's become a powerful demigod and a damn fine leader.

In many ways, Brigitte represents the heart of the Band's defense and its tactical-deployment capability. On top of that, she can dish it out in combat, and she can take a hit and survive it as well as (if not better than) most of the members of her Band. Also, her zombie minions are ideal for acting as backup for the Band in battle. She can even turn fallen enemies into additional troops for her side if circumstances permit.

Proud of his daughter's success, Baron Samedi used his vast power to "upgrade" her coco macaque, making it the vessel for one of his ghede servants. He has also enchanted a number of the feathers shed by the Black Feather Shroud so that each might summon an extant zombie of hers he'd tied to it—similar to how a sparti can be summoned from a dragon's tooth. Brigitte still possesses her ghede glasses and her relic top hat. She also possesses the relic cigarette pack and rum flask from "The Long Road to Heaven."

Roleplaying Hints: You've become a trusted lieutenant to Horace Farrow, who counts on your advice and your willingness to step up into a position of leadership when he's absent or incapacitated. You enjoy the respect in which the Band's other Scions hold you, but you do miss being able to wander off and get plastered without worrying about it affecting your command ability. (You also miss being able to get laid without worrying whether or not the guy you met is a shapechanger or a Titan cultist.) You're still alive though, which is better than a lot of Scions can have said about them. And you figure Horace will *eventually* figure out he can bed you without even trying, so things are far from bleak. There's a lot to look forward to—let the good times roll.

Birthrights: Brigitte's top hat allows her to channel the Darkness Purview. Her ghede glasses allow her to channel the Death and Health Purviews. Her (coco macaque/pool cue) allows her to channel the Psychopomp and Earth Purviews. She can also use it to summon her zombie followers up out of the ground. With its recent upgrade, the spirit of her ghede guide has been bound to the coco macaque, allowing her to receive its guidance whenever she needs it and allowing the relic to move independently and strike on its own. (This is actually the invisible ghede wielding the staff. The ghede has the powers of a Legend 4 ghost (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 292) and the traits of an experienced soldier (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 283), save no knowledge of modern firearms (as he died during the Haitian Revolution).

SCION
DEMIGOD

Brigitte de la Croix Name	Mortician Calling	Loa Pantheon
 Player	Gambler Nature	Baron Samedi God

BRIGITTE DE LA CROIX

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●○○○○○○○ ■■□□□□□□□□	Charisma	●●●●●○○○○○ ■□□□□□□□□□	Perception	●●●●●○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□
Dexterity	●●●●○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□	Manipulation	●●●○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□	Intelligence	●●○○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□
Stamina	●●●●○○○○○○ ■■□□□□□□□□	Appearance	●●●●○○○○○○ ■□□□□□□□□□	Wits	●●●●●○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□

ABILITIES

□ Academics	●○○○○	□ Craft (Embalming)	●○○○○	□ Melee	●●○○○
□ Animal Ken	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	■ Occult	●●○○○
□ Art	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	■ Politics	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	●●○○○	■ Presence	●●○○○
□ Athletics	●●○○○	■ Fortitude	●○○○○	□ Science (Chemistry)	●○○○○
□ Awareness	●●●○○	■ Integrity	●●○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Brawl	●○○○○	□ Investigation	○○○○○	□	○○○○○
■ Command	●●○○○	□ Larceny	●●●○○	□ Stealth	●●●○○
□ Control (Automobiles)	●○○○○	□ Marksmanship	○○○○○	□ Survival	●○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	●○○○○	□ Thrown	●○○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Followers (Zombies) 3, Guide (Ghede) 5,
Relic (Black Feathers) 2, Relic (Coco Macaque-Earth,
Psychopomp) 4, Relic (Ghede Glasses-Death, Health) 2,
Relic (Rum & Cigs) 1, Relic (Top Hat-Darkness) 1

WEAPONS

Coco Macaque: Acc 8, Dmg 7B, Parry DV 5, Spd 6
(ghede-wielded) Acc 10, Dmg 8B, Parry DV 5, Spd 6

KNACKS

Charmer, Crushing Grip,
Devourer, Dreadful Mien,
Inner Furnace, Shock Wave

BOONS

Assess Health, Come Along,
Death Senses, Night Eyes,
Rada's Eyes, Rainbow Bridge,
Safely Interred, Unbarred Entry,
Unerring Orientation,
Unquiet Corpse

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●●○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A 2 L 4 B 6

ARMOR

A____ L____ B____

EXPERIENCE

150

VIRTUES

Harmony	●●○○○
Order	●●○○○
Piety	●●●○○
Vengeance	●●○○○

LEGEND

●●●●●●
●●○○○○

64 Legend Pts

HEALTH

0	0	0	0	0	-4	I
□	□	□	□	□	□	□
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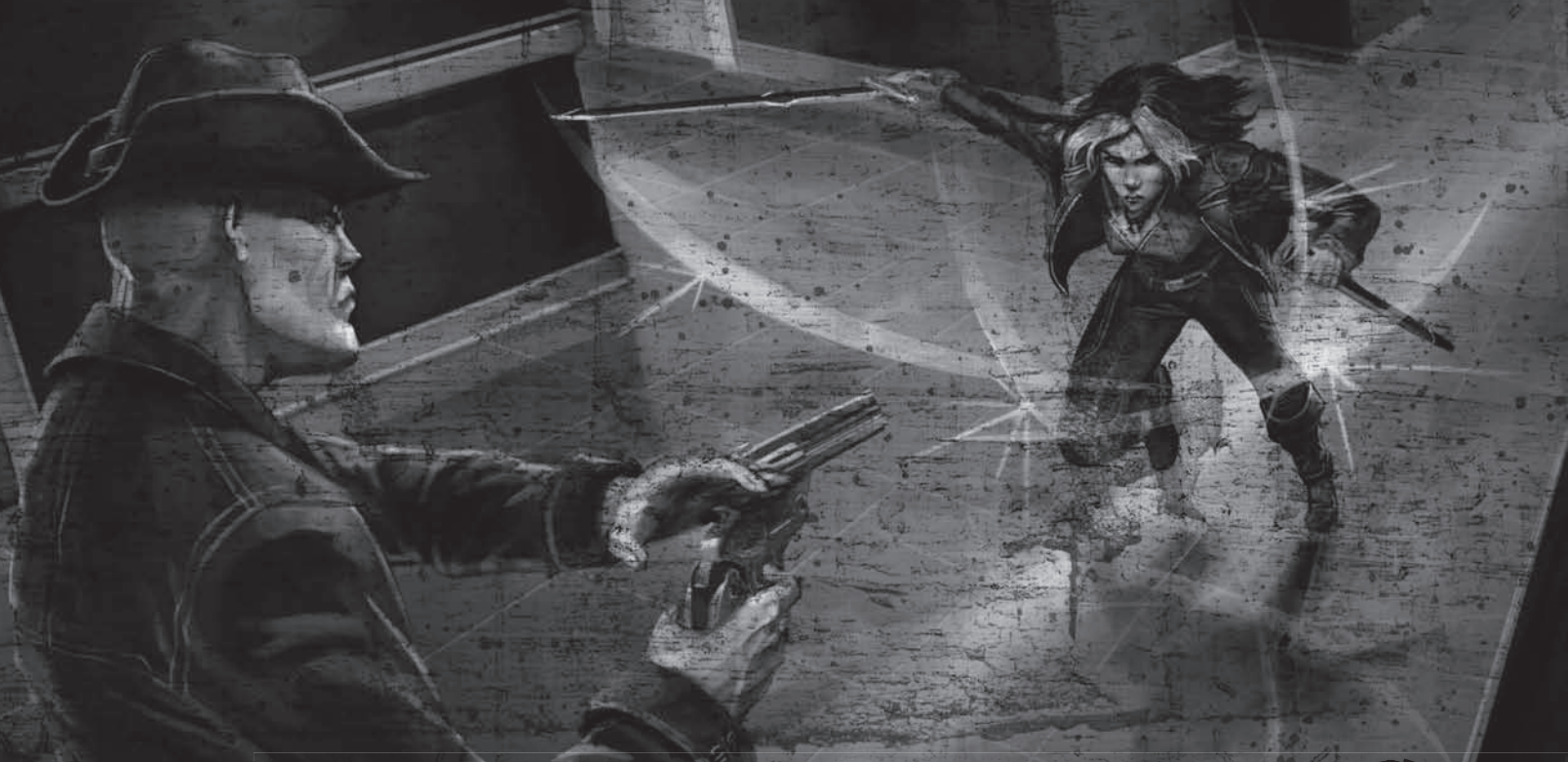
BRIGITTE DE LA CROIX



EPIC ATTRIBUTES AND KNACKS

The more a Scion does in the World and in the mystic places connected to it to thwart the titanspawn and stymie the Titans themselves, the more his Legend grows. When he has performed great works in his divine parent's holy name, earning favor and acclaim far and wide, he grows from being just a hero into his rightful status as a true demigod. As he takes on that mantle, he finds his body ever more suffused with the divine substance known as ichor, whence derive the supernal Epic Attributes. As the powers of his body, personality and mind increase—rendering him capable of feats no mortal can achieve—the character draws ever closer to godhood.

COSTS

The costs for and limitations on granting a character Epic Attributes remain the same at this level as they were for characters at the heroic level. The specific experience-point costs remain as listed in **Scion: Hero** on page 207, with the same additional costs based on whether the Epic Attribute in question is associated with the character's divine parent.

Also, the limit remains that a character can have no more dots in an Epic Attribute than he has dots in the same mundane Attribute. (Fortunately, though, demigod Scions can develop their Attributes to a greater degree than mortals or even lesser heroic Scions can. See **Scion: Hero**, p. 103.) As with heroic Scions, demigod Scions must have at least one more dot of Legend than they have in their highest-rated Epic Attribute. The term "demigod" refers to a Scion whose Legend rating is from 5 to 8, so such a Scion can have from between four and seven dots in any given Epic Attribute.

EFFECTS

In essence, Epic Attributes always provide the same benefit: bonus successes to rolls of the mundane Attributes whence they derive. The same restrictions always hold true for the types of rolls to which you can apply the bonus successes from your character's various Epic Attributes. (See **Scion: Hero**, p. 125.)

What makes having Epic Attributes special at the demigod level is the sheer scale of effect they have. This range of Epic Attributes offers one hell of a lot of extra successes compared to the hero level. With so many successes guaranteed, your characters can achieve stupendous feats that no one in the World but powerful titanspawn and other children of the Gods can match. That's especially true of a character's physical qualities that derive from his Attributes, such as his lifting capacity, his movement speed, his soak and his DVs.

At the demigod level, the number of bonus successes on offer per Epic Attribute dot is as follows:

Epic Attribute Dots	Bonus Successes Available
4	7
5	11
6	16
7	22

How a character's Epic Attributes affect the aforementioned physical qualities that derive from his Physical Attributes is described in the relevant Epic Attributes' write-ups.

KNACKS

As with the heroic level of Epic Attributes, characters who achieve demigod status have Knacks available to them as well. Many of these Knacks are more powerful and more obviously supernatural than those at the heroic level. A character gets one Knack free with each new dot of an Epic Attribute, or he can purchase new ones with experience points. The restriction remains that he may buy only those Knacks that come from Epic Attributes he actually has. Also, some of these more-powerful Knacks are available only if the character has the prerequisite Knack listed in the power's description. If a Knack described here does not have a listed prerequisite, though, a heroic character may choose it as the Knack he receives for his first, second or third dot of his Epic Attribute. Furthermore, a demigod character can choose one of the Knacks listed in **Scion: Hero** as his free Knack that comes with his fourth, fifth, sixth or seventh dot of his Epic Attribute. The only true restriction is that the character cannot buy or receive for free a Knack for which he does not have a listed prerequisite.

EPIC STRENGTH

Demigods with Epic Strength can perform feats that leave mortals' jaws hanging open. They can leap like fleas, juggle church bells and wrestle freight trains off their tracks like cowboys bringing down rowdy longhorns. Titanspawn who have such power can knock down utility poles like stacks of building blocks or destroy homes in a single blow.

You already know from **Scion: Hero** how Epic Strength affects a character's ability to throw something and to lift heavy objects. You also know how it adds to the distance he can jump. (And that's the distance he can jump *vertically*, just to be clear. The modified distance is what's doubled for a horizontal leap.) All that remains is to lay out the specific degree to which the demigod range of Epic Strength affects those capabilities.

Associated With: Amaterasu, Ares, Hephaestus, Horus, Huitzilopochtli, Izanagi, Ogoun, Set, Shango, Sobek, Susano-o, Thor, Tyr, Vidar, Zeus

Dots	Effects
• • • •	Adds seven bonus successes to Strength-based rolls, as well as seven extra yards to vertical leap or feat-of-strength throwing distances. Multiplies the Range of a normal thrown item by 40. Adds 10,000 pounds (five tons) to base lifting capacity.
• • • • •	Adds 11 bonus successes to Strength-based rolls, as well as 11 extra yards to vertical leap or feat-of-strength throwing distances. Multiplies the Range of a normal thrown item by 200. Adds 50,000 pounds (25 tons) to base lifting capacity.
• • • • • •	Adds 16 bonus successes to Strength-based rolls, as well as 16 extra yards to vertical leap or feat-of-strength throwing distances. Multiplies the Range of a normal thrown item by 1,000. Adds 250,000 pounds (125 tons) to base lifting capacity.
• • • • • • •	Adds 22 bonus successes to Strength-based rolls, as well as 22 extra yards to vertical leap or feat-of-strength throwing distances. Multiplies the Range of a normal thrown item by 5,000. Adds 1,250,000 pounds (625 tons) to base lifting capacity.

EPIC STRENGTH KNACKS

Divine Rampage

Prerequisite Knack: Holy Rampage (**Scion: Hero**, p. 126)

When a demigod with this Knack wants to break something, that thing is not long for this world. Like Holy Rampage, this Knack aids in the character's attempt to destroy an inanimate object. If the target object is not under his control—such as a weapon or armor that someone else happens to be using—its Hardness and soak is considered to be halved when the Scion attempts to break it. If the target object is freestanding or under the Scion's control, the object's Hardness and soak is considered to be 0 against the Scion's attack.

Using this Knack costs one Legend point per action.

Divine Wrath

Prerequisite Knack: Crushing Grip (**Scion: Hero**, p. 126)

EPIC THROWING

Epic Strength affects a Scion's ability to throw things in two ways. First, it increases the distance he can throw a normal-sized object. A normal-sized object is one a mortal can easily throw with one hand, such as a baseball, a dart or a javelin. It could also be one that a Scion with Epic Strength can lift with one hand *without* his Epic Strength, such as a manhole cover, a shot put or an anvil. Also, the wording about distance can seem a bit misleading. The modified Range is not the maximum distance the character can throw a normal-sized object, it's the maximum distance the character can throw the object *without penalty*. The character can still throw the object up to four times as far as the modified Range. Doing so incurs a +4 difficulty penalty, and the character must be able to perceive his target in order to be able to aim at it, but that's it. As such, a character with seven dots of Epic Strength could throw a pilum an astounding 200,000 yards (some 113 miles).

Second, Epic Strength increases how far a character can throw something as a feat of strength, which is normally quite difficult. In order to be able to throw an oversized object that isn't designed for throwing, a Scion without Epic Strength must have five more dots in his (Strength + Athletics) total than what is required to lift it as a feat of strength. The thrown object goes only a number of yards equal to the Scion's (Strength + Athletics) total. Scions with Epic Strength, however, can lift an awful lot more than their mundane Strength normally allows. Therefore, assume that a demigod Scion can throw as a feat of strength any object he can lift as a feat of strength with one less dot of Epic Strength. Therefore, if a Scion has Strength 6, Athletics 5 and Epic Strength 6, he can lift and throw any oversized object weighing up to 51,400 pounds. And he can throw it accurately up to 27 yards away. (If he has the Hurl to the Horizon Knack from **Scion: Hero**, p. 126, he can throw the massive object twice that far. If he also has Mighty Heave, he can send the thing flying more than 160 yards.)

A Scion with the demigod range of Epic Strength already needs no weapons to inflict serious damage in combat, but a Scion with this Knack is even more fearsome. The prerequisite Knack enables him to inflict lethal damage during a clinch that he controls, and this Knack builds on that to awful effect. If the Scion spends a point of Legend during a clinch, he can make a single attack inflict aggravated damage instead of lethal. What's more, his normal unarmed combat attacks now inflict lethal damage instead of bashing damage. Keep in mind that that lethal damage is now the standard damage he inflicts unarmed, regardless of whether he spends the point of Legend to make a single clinch's damage aggravated. The Scion can pull his punches and inflict only bashing damage if he wants to, but doing so incurs the "Flat of the Blade" rule from page 199 of **Scion: Hero**.

Knockback Attack

The Scion is able to perform an attack that inflicts no damage whatsoever but sends his enemies flying back. On a successful attack, the Scion can choose for the attack

to inflict damage and knockback normally (see **Scion: Hero,** p. 198), or he can choose for the attack to inflict no harm but to impose one yard of knockback per threshold success above the defender's DV instead. (Doing so costs one Willpower point.) Hardness can still cancel out this effect if it is greater than the attack's raw damage.

Mighty Heave

Prerequisite Knack: Hurl to the Horizon (**Scion: Hero**, p. 126)

This Knack automatically triples the distance a demigod Scion can throw a heavy object as a feat of strength. That tripling comes not only after the modification based on the character's Epic Strength but also after the doubling provided by the prerequisite Knack. (In effect, it multiplies his feat-of-strength throwing distance by six.) Using this Knack costs a point of Legend.

Mighty Heave does not affect the distance a Scion can throw a normal-sized object, but it does intensify the damage such an object can cause. Thrown weapons or other thrown items that would normally cause bashing damage (a coconut, for example) inflict lethal damage and take on the Piercing quality instead when the Scion uses Mighty Heave. Items that would normally cause lethal damage still cause only lethal damage, but they ignore armor when the Scion uses Mighty Heave.

Shock Wave

The Scion is so strong that he can direct his incredible power through the ground or floor to affect enemies at range. Doing so takes two separate forms. First, the character can stomp or strike the ground with his fists or a weapon, which sends a shock wave outward from him along the ground across an area with a radius equal to his Epic Strength in yards. Striking the ground thus to send out the shock wave requires a Strength roll, which receives the benefit of his Epic Strength. Potential victims—friend and foe alike—compare their Dodge DV to the results of this roll. If their DV overcomes the Scion's successes, they manage to jump and let the shock wave pass beneath them. If their DV isn't high enough, they immediately suffer knockdown as well as an amount of bashing damage equal to however many of the Scion's successes their DV couldn't cancel out. (If his allies know the Scion is about to use this Knack—if his using it is part of a coordinated assault, for instance—they can jump out of the way preemptively without having to rely on their DVs.) This attack inflicts no damage on the floor or the ground the Scion strikes. All the energy is expended into the shock wave.

The second form this power takes is more selective and deliberate. As with the first form, the Scion strikes the ground and sends a shock wave along the surface out to a distance equal to his Epic Strength in yards. This time, though, his player makes a standard Dexterity-based attack roll and targets a single opponent. If that opponent's Dodge DV isn't high enough to get him out of the way of the attack, the Scion's player then makes a Strength roll, modified by his Epic Strength but not modified by his extra successes on the attack roll. The damage this attack inflicts is bashing, but it has one other effect that renders the victim almost helpless for a moment afterward. Any successes on the Strength roll that exceed the victim's soak not only inflict damage but also hurl the victim straight up in the air (one yard per unsoaked success). The victim's rise and fall takes six ticks, during which his DVs are considered to be halved. He can make ranged attacks at a -5 penalty, but he can't move or jump or do much of anything until he lands again. In fact, if the Scion's attack sends him high enough in the air, the victim might take damage from crashing back down from so great a height.

Using either form of this Knack requires the expenditure of one Legend point.

EPIC DEXTERITY

Demigods with Epic Dexterity are avatars of divine grace, dodging between raindrops and twisting like the wind around the blades and claws of hordes of titanspawn who would try to tear them down.

Scion: Hero shows in what ways Epic Dexterity affects a character's movement speeds and Defense Values. The following shows the specific extent to which the demigod range of Epic Dexterity affects those capabilities.

Associated With: Artemis, Bastet, Hachiman, Hermes, Raiden, Tezcatlipoca

Dots	Effects
• • • •	Adds seven bonus successes to Dexterity rolls, as well as seven extra yards to Move actions and 14 to Dash actions. Increases a character's Defense Values by seven.
• • • • •	Adds 11 bonus successes to Dexterity rolls, as well as 11 extra yards to Move actions and 22 to Dash actions. Increases a character's Defense Values by 11.
• • • • • •	Adds 16 bonus successes to Dexterity rolls, as well as 16 extra yards to Move actions and 32 to Dash actions. Increases a character's Defense Values by 16.
• • • • • • •	Adds 22 bonus successes to Dexterity rolls, as well as 22 extra yards to Move actions and 44 to Dash actions. Increases a character's Defense Values by 22.

EPIC DEXTERITY KNACKS

Divine Balance

Prerequisite Knack: Cat's Grace (**Scion: Hero**, p. 127)

In addition to the benefits of Cat's Grace, the Scion can now balance on surfaces that shouldn't even be able to support his weight. He's as light on his feet or his hands as a gentle breeze. He could run across a drooping clothesline between two tenement buildings without knocking the clothespins off. He could leap onto the haft of a zombie warrior's out-thrust spear and punt the brute's rotting head off. He could even carry on an epee duel atop a lake of poisonous water, stepping on nothing but the bobbing backs of the dead men floating in it. (He could not, however, step on the water's surface without sinking.)

Escape Artist

The Scion can somehow slip out of the tightest bonds, the most cunning snares and even her opponents' very fingers. Whether she's tied up and left to stew in her own juices or she's wrapped in a clinch with a snarling berserker, she rarely remains bound for long. When someone attacks her character with a successful clinch, the Scion's player not only adds her Epic Dexterity automatic successes to her contested (Dexterity + Brawl) to escape, but she also adds an additional automatic success for every dot of Epic Dexterity her character has. Should the Scion victim's player succeed on this resistance roll, the Scion slips free of her opponent's grasping limbs and well out of his reach.

Also, should a character be physically restrained—tied up, handcuffed, strapped down, whatever—she can slip her bonds with a divine grace that is nothing short of baffling. The player need only spend a point of Legend, and her character's handcuffs come undone, her straightjacket's buckles come loose, or her ropes slough off like a snake's dried-out skin. The Scion can't escape thus in view of witnesses, however, unless said witnesses are members of her own heroic Band or are Fatebound to her. Remote witnesses watching via camera transmission don't hinder the effect, but even close scrutiny of such footage doesn't reveal how the Scion escaped her bonds. She just did.

Ricochet Symphony

If someone is trying to hit a target with a thrown object, the best thing for the target to do is get down behind cover or tuck in behind a shield. If the person trying to hit the target is a Scion with this Knack, however, not even such measures guarantee total safety. Before he lets loose, the Scion reflexively takes in the contours of the surroundings (as the player spends a point of Legend). He then throws his item in a seemingly random direction that nonetheless sends it ringing and bouncing off nearby surfaces to completely circumvent the target's cover or shield, thus negating its DV bonus. The Scion's throw can incorporate a number of ricochets equal to his Epic Dexterity dots, and each ricochet negates a point of DV modifier that comes from cover or a shield. If the Scion is trying to not only hit the target but also disarm him or otherwise show off (more so), each ricochet can mitigate the penalty for doing so as well if he has ricochets left over. The general rule here is that one ricochet takes away one point of penalty on the throw's roll due to cover, a shield, showing off or attempting to disarm the target. When the thrown item finally hits the target, it does so at its full force, regardless of how many times it bounced off walls, floors, light fixtures, other enemies' helmets or what have you.

This Knack works only with thrown objects, and it is not to be combined with the effects of Trick Shooter.

Spider Climber

Prerequisite Knack: Monkey Climber (**Scion: Hero**, p. 128)

In addition to the benefits of the Monkey Climber Knack, the Scion can now climb a vertical surface with sufficient hand- and footholds as quickly as she can dash—taking into account her increased movement rate from Epic Dexterity. Her player doesn't even have to roll to keep her from falling unless she takes a second action while she's climbing (per the multiple action rules in **Scion: Hero** on p. 179). What's more, the demigod can now scale sheer surfaces with no handholds, such as the slick glass face of a skyscraper, and climb upside down across the bottom of horizontal surfaces at her normal Move rate. She cannot take Dash actions on such surfaces, but her Epic Dexterity bonuses apply to her Move rate as usual. She's still subject to gravity, though, so she has to make it a point to hang on while she's climbing thus. Therefore, she cannot take multiple actions while climbing such surfaces.

EPIC STRENGTH VERSUS WHIRLWIND SHIELD

The Whirlwind Shield Knack enables a Scion to parry objects people throw at him. For the most part, such objects will be normal-sized ones hurled at normal speeds. If a Scion or titanspawn with Epic Strength throws a heavy object at the one with this Knack as a feat of strength, however, that's a different story. In that case, the Scion with Whirlwind Shield must have an equal amount of Epic Strength in order to be able to knock the massive projectile aside. If the attacker throws a normal-sized object but uses Mighty Heave to throw it *really hard*, the defending Scion may still apply Whirlwind Shield as normal.

A point of Legend must be spent for the character to use this Knack for one scene.

Whirlwind Shield

Prerequisite Knack: Untouchable Opponent (**Scion: Hero**, p. 128)

Normally, no mortal or Scion can parry thrown attacks without a stunt, nor can one parry bullets at all. When a Scion has this Knack, however, he becomes the whirlwind for which it is named and can defend himself better than mortals or even his Scion peers. Upon activating the Knack, the Scion can apply his full Parry DV to attacks made with thrown items (javelins, chakrams, sling stones, etc.) or with bows or crossbows. He can knock the projectiles aside or snag them out of the air armed or unarmed, almost without thinking about it.

With a stunt, the character can even try to parry bullets. He can do so only with some sort of object that can actually withstand a bullet's impact, though—such as an iron skillet, a Birthright gauntlet or the side of his own gun's barrel. Activating this Knack costs one point of Legend. It lasts for one scene.

EPIC STAMINA

As demigods get more involved in fighting the titanspawn in the World and in the mythic realms connected to it, death surrounds them and closes in on them from all sides. Only those with Epic Stamina can consistently keep its worst ravages at arm's length. They are the unshakable pillars that support their heroic Bands, stoically taking anything life or the titanspawn can dish out.

You've seen in **Scion: Hero** how Epic Stamina not only adds extra successes to rolls but adds to deprivation times and soak, as well as taking away wound penalties. The benefits to soak and deprivation times remain as Epic Stamina increases, and they're accounted for, but wound penalties top out at -4, so there's nothing more for higher levels of Epic Stamina to mitigate. Yet at the demigod level, Epic Stamina provides a boost to something else: the character's health levels. The numbers of additional levels each dot provides are listed here. Keep in mind, though, that the listed numbers are added to the character's unmodified number of health levels. A character with five dots of Epic Stamina adds only 11 health levels to his mundane total. He doesn't add seven when he gets his fourth dot and then add 11 more when he gets the fifth dot.

Associated With: Ares, Dionysus, Hephaestus, Huitzilopochtli, Odin, Sobek, Thor, Tyr, Vidar, Xipe Totec

Dots	Effects
• • • •	Adds seven bonus successes to Stamina rolls. Adds seven to the character's bashing and lethal soak. Provides four points of aggravated soak. Grants seven additional health levels. The character can go seven weeks without food or sleep, and four weeks without water. He can hold his breath for 40 times as long as normal.
• • • • •	Adds 11 bonus successes to Stamina rolls. Adds 11 to the character's bashing and lethal soak. Provides five points of aggravated soak. Grants 11 additional health levels. The character can go 11 weeks without food or sleep, and six weeks without water. He can hold his breath for 200 times as long as normal.
• • • • • •	Adds 16 bonus successes to Stamina rolls. Adds 16 to the character's bashing and lethal soak. Provides six points of aggravated soak. Grants 16 additional health levels. The character can go 16 weeks without food or sleep, and eight weeks without water. He can hold his breath for 1,000 times as long as normal.
• • • • • • •	Adds 22 bonus successes to Stamina rolls. Adds 22 to the character's bashing and lethal soak. Provides seven points of aggravated soak. Grants the character 22 additional health levels. The character can go 22 weeks without food or sleep, and 11 weeks without water. He can hold his breath for 5,000 times as long as normal.

EPIC STAMINA KNACKS

Body Armor

The Scion's body is so tough that, even unarmed, he can parry close-combat attacks that would inflict lethal damage. If a berserker hopped up on Jotunblut or a thrall full of eitr tries to split the Scion's skull with a fire ax, the Scion can take the blow on his forearm and knock it aside without serious injury. (That assumes the character's Parry DV is sufficient to cancel out the attack roll's successes, of course.)

While that benefit remains in effect all the time, the Scion can also engage a temporary one that offers even more protection. With the expenditure of a Legend

point, a measure of the Scion's ichor wells up from within and coats the Scion's body. This coating hardens into a gleaming, metallic armor that's no thicker than a hair's breadth. This armor has a bashing and lethal soak equal to the character's Legend, and it inflicts a mobility penalty of only -1. The ichor coating is thin enough to fit comfortably beneath one's clothing, so it adds its protective value to that of any other armor the character might already be wearing. Natural armor from this Knack lasts for only one scene and disintegrates at the scene's end.

Devourer

Prerequisite Knack: Inner Furnace (**Scion: Hero**, p. 129)

The Scion will never lack for sustenance again. Any liquid that can exist at as a liquid at room temperature can sustain him as water sustains a mortal—even such distasteful liquids as gasoline, blood, pine-scented disinfectant or diet cola. The same goes for food. Whereas Inner Furnace requires that the Scion at least consume organic matter in order to fuel the inferno at his core, this Knack loosens even that restriction. The Scion could fill his belly with sand, polystyrene, harmonicas or suture needles and not feel so much of a pang of indigestion. This Knack confers no special ability to chew up or tear off pieces of inorganic material, but anything small enough to swallow disappears down his gullet with no harmful effects and fuels him just as efficiently as normal food.

Divine Fortitude

Prerequisite Knack: Holy Fortitude (**Scion: Hero**, p. 129)

This Knack doubles the amount of time a Scion can work at a strenuous task once more after the prerequisite Knack doubles the base amount of time (itself modified by the Scion's Epic Stamina). Divine Fortitude also completely obviates a Scion's need for food or sleep or water. The Scion's player chooses which necessity the Knack takes away when he first chooses the Knack. When he does so, the character may still indulge in the activity, but he never suffers deprivation effects if he chooses not to.

A Scion character may take this Knack three separate times after he takes the prerequisite, each time obviating one of the three listed necessities. Taking the Knack multiple times does not, however, double the amount of time he can work at a strenuous task each time. That period doubles only once, the first time he takes the Knack.

Regeneration

Prerequisite Knack: Self-Healing (**Scion: Hero**, p. 129)

Regeneration repairs the severe damage that's too serious for its prerequisite Knack to heal. For a point of Legend, the Scion can automatically heal a single level of aggravated damage. With this Knack, he can also perform such miraculous feats as regenerating a destroyed limb, extremity or eye. Doing so costs one Legend point per body part so restored.

Skin-Shedding

Not only is this Knack a life-saving power, but it can also be an effective (if surreal) means of escape. If an enemy's attack against the Scion inflicts enough damage to cause knockback, the Scion may spend a point of Legend and a point of Willpower to reflexively negate all damage from the attack. The attack still inflicts its knockback, though, seemingly knocking the Scion completely out of his skin. The empty husk collapses at the attacker's feet, disintegrating over three ticks. The Scion who was apparently knocked out of his skin lands perfectly unharmed however far away the knockback threw him, retaining all of his clothing and possessions and radiating a golden sheen until the shed skin disintegrates.

The Scion can use this Knack only once per scene.

EPIC CHARISMA

Demigods with Epic Charisma are the priests of cults devoted to their own greatness. Interacting with them is the closest most mortals will ever come to touching the divine, and these characters all know it. Their friends love them, their rivals respect them, and even their enemies have to admit that there's just something about them that makes it damnably impossible to hate them.

Associated With: Amaterasu, Aphrodite, Apollo, Atum-Re, Baldur, Baron Samedi, Bastet, Damballa, Dionysus, Erzulie, Freya, Freyr, Frigg, Hachiman, Hades, Hera, Huitzilopochtli, Isis, Izanagi, Izanami, Kalfu, Legba, Miclántecuhtli, Odin, Osiris, Poseidon, Quetzalcoátl, Shango, Sif, Tezcatlipoca, Thor, Tlazoltéotl, Tsuki-yomi, Tyr, Zeus

Dots	Effects
• • • •	Adds seven bonus successes to Charisma rolls.
• • • • •	Adds 11 bonus successes to Charisma rolls.
• • • • • •	Adds 16 bonus successes to Charisma rolls.
• • • • • • •	Adds 22 bonus successes to Charisma rolls.

EPIC CHARISMA KNACKS

BFF

Prerequisite Knack: Blessing of Importance (**Scion: Hero**, p. 130)

A heroic Scion with Epic Charisma can help restore a mortal's sense of self worth and empowerment just by paying a bit of attention to him and making him feel special. The charismatic Scion can even replenish a measure of the same for one of his fellow Scions. A demigod Scion's attention makes a person feel even more important, though, especially when the Scion goes out of his way to treat the person like a true friend. When the demigod does so (and spends a point of Legend), he completely refills a fellow Scion's spent Willpower points (if that amount is higher than the charismatic Scion's Epic Charisma). Should he treat a mortal with such affection, the mortal not only regains all his spent Willpower, as per Blessing of Importance, he gains an extra dot of Willpower for the scene. When that extra dot goes away at the end of the scene, the mortal's spent Willpower completely replenishes again.

The Scion can affect a person only once per scene with this Knack.

Crowd Control

Prerequisite Knack: Charmer (**Scion: Hero**, p. 130)

The demigod's force of personality is such that he can quell the passion of a seething mob, whether he's addressing a throng of rowdy political protesters, standing between an innocent kitsune and the lynch mob howling for her hide, or stalling the phalanx of SWAT cops long enough for his partner to finish sacrificing the hostages. By spending a point of Willpower and Legend, the Scion cools the crowd's urge for instant action and buys himself enough time to try to talk some sense into everyone. Doing so is primarily a matter of roleplaying, but if the player is not as good an extemporaneous speechmaker as his character is, he may roll (Charisma + Presence) to simulate his heartfelt call for calm. His words convince three members of the mob per success on the roll.

This effect lasts for the scene, after which the mob either disperses or renews its shenanigans with its original vigor. If the character is attempting to halt the depredations of a mob that is being controlled or directed supernaturally, use of this Knack constitutes an opposed roll against the other power's activation roll. If the power has no activation roll per se, the Scion's player rolls his (Charisma + Presence) against that of the character who incited the mob supernaturally. If the Scion with this Knack gets an equal or greater number of successes, the Knack does what it's supposed to.

Pied Piper

The character exudes such charm and élan that people just want to be around him. When the character engages this Knack, the player need only spend a point of Willpower and a point of Legend. Thereafter, and until the next sunrise, any mortal who looks in the character's direction feels compelled to be in his company. People flock around him like the paparazzi on Oscar night, desperate to be near him and get his attention, and they'll follow him from locale to locale for as long as he keeps leading them. Mortals can resist this compulsion,

but doing so requires a successful (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll with a difficulty equal to the Scion's Legend. Successful resistance breaks the spell for the rest of its duration; a failure means the character cannot try to break away again for another hour. The demigod character can have as many lingering groupies and hangers on as his Epic Charisma dots normally grant him bonus successes on Charisma rolls.

Scions use this Knack not only to gather up fellow revelers for long, roving parties, but also to surround themselves with unwitting human shields. For as long as the Knack lasts, the compelled mortals *will not* abandon the Scion unless he chooses to end the effect early.

Preach On

Prerequisite Knack: Inspirational Figure (**Scion: Hero**, p. 130)

When a demigod has a willing audience, he can inspire every member with an uplifting, well-intentioned speech or sermon. This Knack works exactly as its prerequisite, and functions under the same limitations, but it is more effective. Mortals and Scions who hear it are so inspired that their spent Willpower points are entirely refilled.

This Knack also has a more insidious dimension. If the Scion finds himself in charge of a group of titanspawn, he can spend a point of Willpower and give those awful minions a speech that empowers them just as Inspirational Figure inspires mortals. Each titanspawn who hears him regains a point of spent Willpower. Scions who might be opposed to the titanspawn's goals don't receive any benefit from this inspirational speech, but they are compelled to let the demigod finish what he has to say before they do something about it.

Unimpeachable Reference

With this Knack, the demigod can actually lend someone else a portion of his credibility and authority. When the player spends a point of Legend and the character either vouches for or lends a recognizable token to someone to act on his behalf, he confers on that person the effects of the Benefit of the Doubt Knack (from **Scion: Hero**, p. 130). This halo of credibility affects even those people who do not know the demigod personally. It is still up to the character who receives the effect to convince the person he's speaking to that he's on the level, but this Knack makes getting over the initial hurdle of suspicion and disbelief much easier.

EPIC MANIPULATION

To demigods with Epic Manipulation, mortals are theirs to command. Mortals become living pieces in vast games whose only goal is to amuse or enrich those demigods who care to play. Rare is the demigod with Epic Manipulation who lacks for anything he wants. In fact, if such a Scion can't get something he wants, it's usually because another Scion with an even greater gift for manipulation is keeping it out of his hands.

Associated With: Aphrodite, Atum-Re, Hades, Hel, Hera, Isis, Loki, Odin, Ogoun, Osiris, Poseidon, Set, Tezcatlipoca, Tlazoltéotl, Zeus

Dots	Effects
• • • •	Adds seven bonus successes to Manipulation rolls.
• • • • •	Adds 11 bonus successes to Manipulation rolls.
• • • • • •	Adds 16 bonus successes to Manipulation rolls.
• • • • • • •	Adds 22 bonus successes to Manipulation rolls.

EPIC MANIPULATION KNACKS

Advantageous Circumstances

With this Knack, a Scion turns a group of people into his own Rube Goldberg machine. Taking only a moment to glance around the room at what the people around him are doing, the Scion decides what result he wants to achieve and takes the first small step toward achieving that end. The effect can take no more than a scene to accomplish, and it can be no more than a personal, temporal gain for himself.

For Example: A Scion of Ogoun is at a bar having a drink when up pulls the motorcycle of the Scion of Sobek from whom he stole an expensive and powerful Birthright. The Scion of Ogoun needs a distraction so he can slip out the back before the Scion of Sobek notices him and turns him into mincemeat. After a quick glance around, the Scion of Ogoun motions to the bartender and orders a drink for a pretty girl across the room. He also pays off his tab. As the waitress takes the drink over, a sour-faced middle-aged man exits the restroom and walks back toward the table where his shrewish wife is waiting. The waitress hands the drink to the pretty girl and points back toward the Scion of Ogoun, but the middle-aged man just happens to be in the way. The pretty girl waves and smiles her thanks, and the middle-aged man smiles back in distracted confusion as the Scion of Ogoun tips the girl a wink. It's at this point that the Scion of Sobek enters and notices the Scion of Ogoun putting on his jacket. As the Scion of Sobek comes toward the Scion of Ogoun's seat, the middle-aged man meets his shrewish wife heading toward him. Having misinterpreted the pretty girl's wave of thanks to the Scion of Ogoun, she demands to know why her husband bought a strange girl a drink. She throws her own drink in his face, sending him tripping over his own feet and stumbling backward toward the Scion of Sobek. That Scion stops and catches the middle-aged guy before the poor fellow can crack his head against the corner of a nearby table. Yet when the Scion looks back up to find his prey again, the Scion of Ogoun is nowhere to be seen.

Using this Knack doesn't have to be that complicated. As long as the player and Storyteller can come up with a quick sequence of convenient, coincidental events that spring from the Scion's first small action, that's all that's required. The important thing is to keep each of the events low key and not to hog too much of the spotlight in so doing.

Hard Sell

Prerequisite Knack: Overt Order (**Scion: Hero**, p. 131)

Like the Overworld's own Amway salesman, the demigod can convince a group of people to perform one particular action that they would not otherwise be inclined to perform. That is, the Scion can issue an overt order (per the eponymous prerequisite Knack) to a group of people, who must be able to hear him clearly without him using any amplifying or broadcasting equipment. The order must be simple, and it must be something the listeners can carry out in one action while they are within the Scion's presence. The order can be something instant like, "Everybody get outside!" or, "Arrest that man!" It can also be something sneaky like, "Buy my book," or, "Register for next month's seminar by paying me $1,000." The same restrictions that apply to how loosely a victim can interpret the Overt Order Knack apply to this Knack.

Instant Hypnosis

Prerequisite Knack: Overt Order (**Scion: Hero**, p. 131)

With a moment of eye contact and the expenditure of a Willpower point, the Scion instantly plunges a mortal into a hypnotic trance. Attempting to hypnotize a fellow Scion of lesser or equal (Willpower + Legend) requires not only a Willpower expenditure but a (Manipulation + Command + Legend) roll contested against the victim's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). Scions cannot instantly hypnotize fellow Scions of higher (Willpower + Legend).

Should he successfully hypnotize a victim, the Scion can implant one hidden command that the victim must obey at the time of the Scion's choosing. The command must be something that the victim can accomplish in one scene, and the trigger condition that compels him to attempt it must occur within a number of months equal to the Scion's Legend. The Scion can give as specific an order as he pleases, and a mortal cannot interpret it in any way other than the spirit in which it was intended. A fellow Scion can interpret it loosely to his own advantage, as per Overt Order, but doing so costs him a point of Willpower.

The victim remains unaware of the ticking time bomb in his subconscious, but he does have a chance to resist it when the trigger condition occurs. At the moment when he has been commanded to perform the action in question, the victim's player may make a (Wits + Integrity) roll. (This roll cannot be modified by a Scion's Epic Wits or an Integrity Arete.) If the roll garners more successes than the hypnotist Scion has dots of Legend, the compulsion is broken. If the last-minute resistance roll fails, the victim must attempt to do as he was commanded. Whether he succeeds or fails, the compulsion ends after he makes the attempt, and he has no memory of what could possibly have convinced him to do as he did.

Knowing Glance

Knowing that someone is keeping a damning secret can be quite an effective tool in getting him to do what you want. With this Knack, however, that knowledge is not only a tool, but a powerful weapon. When the Scion is aware that another character is keeping a dangerous secret—whether he has uncovered it through investigation or has discovered its presence through the Stench of Guilt Knack (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 132)—he need only make eye contact with the guilty party. As the Scion's player spends a point of Legend, the character with the secret suddenly realizes that someone else *knows*, and he loses all of his unspent Willpower points from his pool. The Scion can affect the same character thus only once per day, and the Knack has no effect if the victim is not actually hiding the secret the Scion thinks he is.

Rumor Mill

The demigod Scion can play make a lyre of the media, lending credence and giving unexpected life to the wildest of rumors. He need only come up with a seed rumor and cast it adrift in conversation with someone (even a stranger) and watch it bloom in the fertile fields of the public imagination. In order to make his rumor catch on, the Scion's player need only spend a point of Legend and make an instant (Manipulation + Politics) roll. The number of successes this roll accumulates determines the height of public attention to which the rumor will rise before it is either accepted as true (if it *is* true) or proven to be poppycock (if it's something the Scion made up).

Successes	Exposure
1	Some nut-job's blog
5	Local 'zine and newspaper coverage
15	Major metropolitan newspaper coverage
20	Local TV news coverage
30	Several popular websites and blogs
35	National newspaper and magazine coverage
45	National cable TV news coverage
50	Worldwide news media

For a rumor or a fact to make its way from the Scion's lips to its highest level of exposure takes one month minus a number of days equal to the Scion's (Manipulation + Epic Manipulation + Legend) total—with a minimum of one hour. Once it gets there, a false rumor maintains its level of exposure for a number of days equal to the Scion's Legend before being proven false. A true fact remains at that level of coverage for the same amount of time.

EPIC APPEARANCE

Demigod characters with Epic Appearance have grown so like their divine parents that they are either luminous paragons of beauty or hideous atavisms from humanity's earliest nightmares. The only beings more beautiful or more frightening are the Gods themselves. Even the most bestial titanspawn are rarely so impressive.

As with the heroic level, the demigod range of Epic Appearance dots allows a Scion to reroll a number of failed Presence attempts in a given scene. (See **Scion: Hero**, p. 132.) Those numbers are included here along with the dice bonuses.

Associated With: Amaterasu, Aphrodite, Apollo, Baldur, Erzulie, Freya, Hel*, Izanami*, Miclántecuhtli*, Raiden*, Sif, Tezcatlipoca, Tlaloc*, Tlazoltéotl

(* represents monstrous ugliness)

Dots	Effects
• • • •	Adds seven bonus successes to Appearance rolls. Grants four free Presence rerolls per scene.
• • • • •	Adds 11 bonus successes to Appearance rolls. Grants five free Presence rerolls per scene.
• • • • • •	Adds 16 bonus successes to Appearance rolls. Grants six free Presence rerolls per scene.
• • • • • • •	Adds 22 bonus successes to Appearance rolls. Grants seven free Presence rerolls per scene.

EPIC APPEARANCE KNACKS

Blinding Visage

Mortal beauty or ugliness can take one's breath away, but divine beauty or ugliness can do so much more. When a Scion grows angry at a mortal—such as a tabloid photographer who just won't leave him alone—his player can spend a point of Legend and sear his visage into the mortal's retinas. Doing so blinds and disorients the mortal for the remainder of the scene. If the Scion's Epic Appearance represents beauty, the victim meanders aimlessly, dazzled by the character's divine radiance. If the Epic Appearance represents ugliness, the victim staggers around in a blind panic unable to get the awful visage out of his head.

Rules for dealing with blindness appear on page 186 of **Scion: Hero**.

Compelling Presence

Prerequisite Knack: Serpent's Gaze (**Scion: Hero**, p. 133)

As with the prerequisite Knack, Compelling Performance draws a victim's attention to the Scion and renders him unable to look away. The victim remains Inactive for combat purposes, staring helplessly at the hideous monster or unearthly beauty before him. Unlike Serpent's Gaze, though, the Scion need not consciously maintain eye contact with her victim for the effect to endure. Once the victim has been transfixed by the Scion's Epic Appearance, he remains thus until either the end of the scene or until the Scion leaves his line of sight. The victim will follow the Scion with his eyes, even turn in place if she wanders around the immediate area, but he can't do anything other than look at her.

What's more, the Scion can capture a number of victims with her appearance equal to her (Epic Appearance + Legend) total. Her player only spends one point of Legend per person up to the maximum, and they all stop what they're doing to stare at her in rapt fascination. When the effect ends, they remember nothing that happened after the first moment they saw the Scion. Mortals and Scions of lesser or equal Legend are unable to look away on their own, but Scions with a greater Legend are not so vulnerable. After the Scion using the Knack takes one full action, the higher-Legend victim may spend a point of Willpower to negate the effect. In so doing, he remains immune to the effect from the same Scion for the rest of the scene.

Inescapable Vision

Prerequisite Knack: Lasting Impression (**Scion: Hero**, p. 133)

This Knack torments a victim with an endless parade of the Scion's face, passing the victim by on all sides and driving him ever deeper into frustrated despair. Spending a point of Legend and a point of Willpower, the Scion burns a mental vision of himself so deeply into the victim's mind that everyone the victim sees thereafter who's of the same sex as the Scion seems to be wearing the Scion's face. This effect is especially jarring because other features such as height, weight, hairstyle, skin tone and whatnot don't change from what's natural for the person the victim is actually seeing. Only the Scion's face stands out, sized and colored as appropriate for the person on hand, yet still undeniably the Scion's own.

Shaking off this disorienting hallucination costs the victim a point of Willpower, but that doesn't end the effect. An hour later, the effect creeps back up on the victim until every person of the appropriate gender has the Scion's face again. Even worse, a character cannot regain spent Willpower points while he's languishing under this effect. The only hope for a mortal victim is that the Scion will track him down and decide to end the effect. The demigod can do the same for Scion victims as well, but in the children of the Gods, the effect will wear off on its own after the victim has spent 24 hours with no points of Willpower.

My Eyes Are Up Here

As Scions build up ever more dots of Epic Appearance, they grow ever more unearthly. As such, whether they're beautiful or quite the opposite, it becomes increasingly difficult to deal with mortal humans on their level. The Scion's Epic Appearance can't help but get in the way. This Knack, however, mitigates that factor. When the Scion's player spends a point of Willpower to activate it for the scene, any mortals who see the character completely ignore his Appearance score (both Epic and mundane). Witnesses might vaguely remember that a beautiful Scion was kind of pretty or that a disgustingly ugly Scion was dirty and a little scary, but that's it. They won't recognize the Scion again later unless the Scion uses this Knack in their presence again, and they won't be able to describe the Scion in great detail to anyone else. They might get height, hair color, skin tone, build and style of dress right, but details beyond those generalities prove elusive. Scions themselves are immune to this effect, as they are more than capable of dealing with the extremes that Epic Appearance represents.

This Knack lasts for the scene, though the Scion can choose to turn off the effect before then. Also, while he's using this Knack to deal with a mortal, he cannot use any other Epic Appearance Knacks against him. Nor can he apply his Epic Appearance to rolls pertaining to dealing with that mortal at all until he lifts the effect.

Perfect Actor

The Scion can put on an emotional display so convincing that anyone who can see him clearly enough, and in person, to read his emotion feels that same emotion just as strongly as the Scion seems to. That emotional state lasts for the rest of the scene. When the effect wears off, the affected victims are unable to explain what came over them, and are likely embarrassed by letting their feelings run away with them like that.

Activating this Knack costs one Willpower, and it works whether the Scion is beautiful or awful.

EPIC PERCEPTION

Little escapes the all-seeing eyes of demigods with Epic Perception. They can find a straight pin in a haystack by listening for the footsteps of the angels dancing on its head. They can track a raptor through the sky by the smell of blood on its talons. They can look down from the gondola of the Goodyear blimp at the Super Bowl and count how many people in the stands are wearing red hats.

Associated With: Anubis, Artemis, Atum-Re, Bastet, Heimdall, Odin

Dots	Effects
• • • •	Adds seven bonus successes to Perception rolls.
• • • • •	Adds 11 bonus successes to Perception rolls.
• • • • • •	Adds 16 bonus successes to Perception rolls.
• • • • • • • •	Adds 22 bonus successes to Perception rolls.

EPIC PERCEPTION KNACKS

Broad-Spectrum Reception

This Knack not only magnifies a demigod's mortal senses, but steps beyond them altogether. His eyes can now perceive waves in the infrared and ultraviolet ends of the electromagnetic spectrum. He can see magnetic fields, hear electricity humming within insulated wires and detect ultrasonic vibrations. He can smell the free electrons of a radioactive substance. He can even feel television and radio waves, though he can't quite translate them into discrete pictures or sounds. The only catch is that the Scion must be actively searching for each sensation—the default assumption is that his senses are those of a regular mortal. Attuning his brain for this higher awareness and overlaying it on his mortal consciousness costs one point of Legend for the scene, but he can switch between the various sensations freely during that time.

Environmental Awareness

Prerequisite Knack: Subliminal Warning (**Scion: Hero**, p. 134)

The demigod is so in tune with his surroundings, that he can detect even the most minute changes around him well before anyone else. He can feel the barometric pressure rise or drop (and describe it accurately), giving him an acute sense of what the weather is going to do in the next hour. He can feel the tiniest tectonic vibrations from deep within the earth, allowing him to accurately presage an earthquake. Changes in temperature are no mystery to him either. His awareness is so complete that should some unnatural factor change one of these elements, he's the first to notice and can even track the disturbance back to its source. Also, if enemies are lying in ambush in the nearby area and are not concealed by supernatural means, it is impossible for their surprise attack to catch the Scion unaware. The Scion may join battle and react accordingly without his player having to roll to notice the hidden attack. If he reflexively spends a point of Legend, he may call out a warning for his cohorts to be ready and react accordingly as well.

As an added benefit, the Scion is unfailingly aware of the passage of time. Without even thinking about it, he can accurately say how much time has passed from any reference point that he has personally experienced.

Spatial Attunement

The Scion is so aware of his surroundings that his other senses (primarily those of hearing and smell) compensate for his eyes in identifying nearby objects outside his line of sight. The Scion could recognize the person sneaking up on him by that person's telltale scent and mark exactly how far away that person is by the sound of his passing. With one quick glance around the room, the Scion could mark in his mind exactly where every wall and piece of furniture is within. Having done so, he could then navigate the room with his eyes closed, even slipping through a milling crowd of people without bumping into anyone or anything. To a certain extent, the character can perceive what's going on around him in a 360-degree arc. Also, he suffers no penalties for fighting blind as long as he can hear or smell his opponents.

Supernal Hunter

Prerequisite Knack: Predatory Focus (**Scion: Hero**, p. 134)

Where Predatory Focus makes a heroic Scion an exceptionally skilled hunter, this Knack makes the demigod Scion the unstoppable pursuer that prey animals have nightmares about. If he can find a location where he is absolutely certain his prey has been within the last 24 hours, he can follow that prey's trail unerringly no matter where the prey goes. If the prey takes flight—either because it's a bird or because it's a man with a plane ticket—he can track it through the air. If it swims away in a raging river, he can follow it through the water. If it gets into a car and drives uptown through rush hour traffic, he can retrace its path. Usually, the hardest part of the hunt lies in knowing where to start; after that, it's just a matter of catching up. The one hitch to using this Knack is that unless the Scion has the next Knack, Telescopic Senses, he must be able to travel within 100 yards of the prey's path of escape. If the prey flies higher, swims deeper or burrows farther than 100 yards from the nearest path the Scion can take to follow, the Scion loses the trail.

Telescopic Senses

A Scion's Epic Perception allows him to hear, see and smell things from much farther away than mortal senses do. With this Knack, the Scion can not only perceive these sensations, but perceive them as if they were happening right in front of him. If he's within the range at which the sound of someone's voice can travel, he can not only hear that voice, but follow its conversation as clearly as if he were participating. If a sniper is crouched high up on a ridgeline within his line of sight, the Scion can not only see him but also recognize him and count the notches on his rifle stock. If he's wandering in the woods and the wind brings him the distant scent of someone's camp fire, he can not only smell it but tell what kind of wood they're burning, what brand of marshmallows they're roasting and how long it's been since they've had a good bath.

EPIC INTELLIGENCE

The sheer processing power of a demigod's Epic Intelligence puts even the most powerful supercomputers to shame. Such Scions' strategies are flawless, their technical designs are nothing short of magical, and their wisdom is unmatched by the most learned of mortal sages.

Associated With: Athena, Frigg, Hephaestus, Hermes, Loki, Odin, Ptah, Quetzalcoátl, Thoth

Dots	Effects
• • • •	Adds seven bonus successes to Intelligence rolls.
• • • • •	Adds 11 bonus successes to Intelligence rolls.
• • • • • •	Adds 16 bonus successes to Intelligence rolls.
• • • • • • •	Adds 22 bonus successes to Intelligence rolls.

EPIC INTELLIGENCE KNACKS

Cipher

The Scion's brain is his own personal Enigma machine. He can break any encryption and decode any message created by someone without Epic Intelligence, without the need for a roll. He can also design a one-time code for a specific recipient that cannot be broken by anyone without Epic Intelligence (regardless of how smart such a person is or what decryption equipment he might have on hand). Only a fellow Scion with Epic Intelligence can even attempt to break the code—calling for opposed (Intelligence + Academics) rolls. The person for whom the coded message is intended can automatically read the message as clearly as if it were written in his native language.

Language Mastery

The Scion can understand any language that is spoken to him. Once he's heard a few sentences, he can then speak that language back as if he grew up among native speakers. Writing the language is a bit trickier, as he can only transliterate his written words in the alphabet of his native language until someone teaches him the alphabet and punctuation of the new language. For instance, say a Scion with this Knack whose native language is English has picked up French at Orly Airport in Paris and would like to leave a thank-you note for a bartender who gave him helpful information. That Scion might write, "Mare-see du mah-vay zayday," to express his thanks, when what he really means is, "*Merci de m'avez aidé*."

Likewise, reading the new language can be difficult if that language uses characters that don't appear in an alphabet with which he is already familiar.

Multitasking

The Scion can carry on as many separate primarily mental activities as he has dots of Legend simultaneously and with his full attention. A Scion with Legend 6 could play a game of chess against a recognized master while also playing go against a ninth-*dan* professional, translating a James Joyce novel into a different language, reprogramming his computer, planning a raid against the titanspawn entrenched in the historic ruins across town and itemizing his various businesses' tax deductions for the year. The character never suffers distraction penalties for mental actions, nor are his separate simultaneous mental actions penalized as per the multiple action rules (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 179).

Star Pupil

Prerequisite Knack: Fast Learner (**Scion: Hero**, p. 135)

The Scion is now a better student than ever before. Not only does he learn the prerequisite Knack's listed subjects far more rapidly than normal, he now learns Athletics, Brawl, Craft, Control, Investigation, Larceny, Marksmanship, Melee, Survival and Thrown at the reduced experience point cost. Having a Scion teacher with the Teaching Prodigy Knack doubles the reduction again, just as it does for the prerequisite Knack.

Wireless Interface

If the Scion devotes his total attention to doing so, he can mentally interface with an active computer without so much as touching it. He need only be able to see the computer, though not necessarily the monitor, in order to communicate with it. (Also, the computer must be turned on. *Anybody* can talk to a computer that isn't on. Same thing happens too.) The degree to which the Scion can program the computer or access its files is the same whether he's sitting at a keyboard in front of a monitor or just staring at its CPU, though, so it behooves him to at least know his way around an interface.

Mentally interfacing with a computer's programming absorbs the Scion's attention, imposing a -2 distraction penalty on him unless he also has the Multitasking Knack.

EPIC WITS

Demigods with this degree of Epic Wits never lack for options, even when their backs are against the wall and the titanspawn are closing in all around. They are always calm, collected and in charge of their faculties regardless of what hellish circumstances might surround them. Their minds are always furious thunderstorms of activity, keeping them constantly 10 steps ahead of their friends and enemies.

Associated With: Athena, Bastet, Hachiman, Hermes, Legba, Loki, Odin, Susano-o, Tezcatlipoca, Tyr

Dots	Effects
• • • •	Adds seven bonus successes to Wits rolls.
• • • • •	Adds 11 bonus successes to Wits rolls.
• • • • • •	Adds 16 bonus successes to Wits rolls.
• • • • • • •	Adds 22 bonus successes to Wits rolls.

EPIC WITS KNACKS

Cobra Reflexes

The character is so quick on the draw that even a surprise attacker is not safe from him. If someone attacks him from surprise but the character's player fails to get enough successes on the (Wits + Awareness) roll to notice the attack coming, the Scion may still attack his attacker back at the same time. This counterattack is so lightning quick that it catches the attacker off guard as if he were also being caught by an unexpected attack. The Scion himself might not realize he's taken the attack action until the ambusher's attack has already hurt him.

VARIOUS KNACKS VERSUS SURPRISE ATTACKS

If a Scion has Rabbit Reflexes (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 136) and Cobra Reflexes, he cannot use both Knacks against the same surprise attack. He can either dodge preternaturally well or catch his surprise attacker in a surprise counterattack—the choice is up to the player. The character cannot use either Rabbit Reflexes or Cobra Reflexes if he has the Eternal Vigilance or Environmental Awareness (see below and p. 64) Knacks (since both render him unable to ever be caught by surprise). Just something to bear in mind when you choose your Knacks.

Eternal Vigilance

Similar to the Environmental Awareness Knack (see p. 64), a Scion with this Knack is never taken by surprise by unexpected attacks. He joins battle as soon as the attack occurs, and he applies his full DV to his

own defense. It doesn't matter whether the attackers use supernatural means of concealment or not. They simply cannot catch him off guard. Unfortunately, this Knack doesn't help the Scion's comrades. The Scion reacts as the surprise occurs, but he does so practically subconsciously and not in time to warn anyone else.

What's more, this Knack works even if the Scion is asleep, though to a lesser extent. If the Scion is sleeping and someone tries to spring an unexpected attack, the player rolls the Scion's full dice pool to notice the attack as he would if the character were awake (awake and didn't have this Knack, that is). If the roll succeeds, the character wakes just in time to react to the attack, though still not in time to warn anyone else.

Instant Assessment

With a quick glance, and the expenditure of one Legend point, the Scion can size up a foe with whom he intends to join battle. This assessment comes across in terms of how the foe's combat abilities compare to the Scion's own. He gets a sense of whether the foe has more or fewer dots of Physical Attributes (Epic and otherwise) than he does. The same goes for their relative number of dots in Brawl, Marksmanship, Melee and Thrown, as well as their relative Join Battle dice pools and their soak totals. Also, if some power or special quality renders the foe especially vulnerable or completely invulnerable to something to which the Scion has ready access, the Scion gets a sense of that as well. What the Scion decides to do with this information is up to him.

This information occurs reflexively to the Scion who uses the Knack, and he may assess as many foes automatically as he spends points of Legend.

Monkey in the Middle

When multiple attackers gang up on a single opponent, their combined efforts can disconcert and intimidate even the best trained martial artist. A character with this Knack, however, keeps his cool despite how high the odds might be stacked against him. As a result, he suffers no coordinated attack penalty or onslaught penalty in combat when multiple attackers try to rush him all at once.

Perfect Imposter

Prerequisite Knack: Social Chameleon (**Scion: Hero**, p. 136)

Impersonating someone in order to infiltrate his home or workplace or to get dangerously close to someone he cares about is more difficult the less well the impersonator knows his subject. The best makeup and disguise means nothing if the imposter can't react to life's little surprises exactly as the subject of his mimicry would react. With this Knack, however, the Scion can discern with preternatural quickness how the people who think he's someone else *expect* that someone else to react. Their minute changes of expression or body language give their expectations away, allowing the imposter to react accordingly.

For the most part, this Knack plays itself out without resorting to dice rolls or trait comparisons. As the imposter's player roleplays (and the imposter himself does so also), the Storyteller simply informs him of what the unsuspecting characters' expectations are, and the player chooses his imposter's reactions accordingly. This Knack does not provide a supernatural disguise that would fool someone with the Unfailing Recognition Knack (from **Scion: Hero**, p. 134), but even if such a Scion can see through the imposter's disguise, his recognition alone would not be enough to convince anyone else. The imposter retains the wherewithal to stand up to any impromptu interrogation and maintain his charade in everyone else's eyes, thus making the only other Scion who knows the imposter's true identity look like a horse's ass or a liar.

DIVINE BOONS

Where heroic Boons—i.e., those worth one to three dots—are marvelous supernatural powers, those worth four to seven dots are miraculous wonders beyond the scope of any mortal abilities. To see a Scion use such powers is to witness unequivocal evidence of divine intervention.

PURVIEWS AND BIRTHRIGHTS

In order to use Boons from the all-purpose or special Purviews, a heroic Scion must channel them through a Birthright relic. Some Scions access many Purviews through a single relic. Others carry several and access one Purview through each. Both approaches have benefits and drawbacks, but the necessity remains either way. Without his relic(s), the heroic Scion is powerless.

Not so the demigod.

When a Scion's Legend climbs above four dots, he no longer *needs* a relic to channel those Purviews that come most naturally to him. That is, those all-purpose and special Purviews that are specifically associated with the Scion's divine parent are now so intrinsically a part of him that he can activate their Boons by will alone. Doing so has a slight restriction, though. The Scion can never truly surpass the benefits of using his Birthright for its intended purpose. If he tries to use a Boon without the Purview's relic, his Legend is considered to be one dot lower for that Purview's purposes. If the area or intensity of an effect is based on the character's Legend, he uses the reduced rating. If using the Boon on a fellow Scion calls for a comparison of the two opponents' Legend, the user of the Boon compares his reduced Legend to the other Scion's full Legend.

The most important factor, though, is that the Scion's Legend must remain one dot higher than the dot rating of any Boon he intends to use. If the Scion's effective Legend decreases in regard to a Purview because he isn't using his Birthright relic for that Purview, the highest-rated Boons he can use from that Purview decreases by one as well. For example, if a Scion of Ares has Legend 8 and he has all of the listed Boons for the War Purview (worth from one to seven dots), he may use any of those seven Boons as long as he has the relic through which he accesses the War Purview. If he's in a tight spot on the battlefield and loses that relic, he can still access the War Purview because that Purview is specifically associated with Ares. Should he do so, however, his Legend is considered to be 7 for the purposes of the War Purview. As a result, he can use only those War Boons rated at six dots or lower. Also, if he uses Army of One (see p. 89)

in this situation, he can create only seven duplicates with it at most. If he regains his relic, he can once again create eight duplicates or use the Colossus Armor Boon.

Likewise, if a Scion of Tezcatlipoca with Legend 8 has seven dots of the Magic Purview, he can use any spells of the one- to seven-dot power levels as long as he has his Magic Birthright. He can still use his cast Magic spells if he loses his Magic Birthright, but only those rated from one to six dots.

The Scion's actual Legend rating does not decrease for purposes other than using those select Purviews without his Birthright relic. His Legend-point pool is still equal to the square of his true Legend rating. His Legend remains the same for his pantheon-specific Boons, which don't require a Birthright relic. The rating also stays the same for those Boons from Purviews that aren't associated with his divine parent, as long as he hasn't lost the relic that using those Purviews requires.

BOON COSTS

All the experience-point costs for new Boons remain the same for the different types of Boons as they were listed in **Scion: Hero**. For quick reference, they are as follows:

Purview Type	Experience Cost
All-Purpose (associated)	4 per dot
All-Purpose (not associated)	5 per dot
Pantheon-Specific (first dot)	3
Pantheon-Specific (new dot)	current rating x 4
Special (first dot; associated)	3
Special (first dot; not associated)	4
Special (new dot; associated)	current rating x 4
Special (new dot; not associated)	current rating x 5
Magic Spell (associated)	4 per dot
Magic Spell (not associated)	5 per dot

Boons from all-purpose Purviews must be purchased separately but need not be purchased in sequence. Boons from pantheon-specific Purviews must be purchased in sequence but not separately (meaning that you need only buy the next dot in a growing Purview rating to get the next Boon). The same goes for the special Purviews. Additional Magic spells are purchased as all-purpose Purview Boons.

ALL-PURPOSE PURVIEWS

These Purviews are associated with specific Gods but are available to Scions of every heritage. Each Boon may be purchased separately and out of sequence. Using these Boons requires a Birthright unless the Purview whence they come is specifically associated with the Scion's divine parent.

ANIMAL

Each of this Purview's Boons works on only one type of animal, chosen by the player when he purchases the Boon. That animal needn't be the same one associated with his divine parent. He can purchase Boons from this Purview multiple times, however, to grant his character the same power over several different types of animals. He can also decide that each Boon he has applies to a different animal.

Associated With: Anubis (Jackal), Athena (Owl), Atum-Re (Falcon), Bastet (Cat), Damballa (Snake), Geb (Goose), Hachiman (Dove), Hera (Peacock), Horus (Falcon), Huitzilopochtli (Hummingbird, Eagle), Miclántecuhtli (Dog), Osiris (Centipede, Ram), Poseidon (Horse), Quetzalcoátl (Resplendent Quetzal), Set (Salawa), Sobek (Crocodile), Tezcatlipoca (Jaguar), Thoth (Baboon, Ibis)

RIDE ANIMAL (ANIMAL ••••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Animal Ken

Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion stares into the eyes of a specimen of his chosen animal, the one to which his Boon pertains, and overwhelms its mind with his own. For the rest of the scene, the Scion controls the animal's body just as a character with Horse (Cheval •••) can control a human's body. This Boon functions exactly as that one does (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 150), with the same limitations and effects on the Scion's body. The only difference is that Horse applies to possession of a human's body, while Ride Animal applies to specimens of the Scion's chosen animal or to his Birthright creature.

A Birthright creature can allow the Scion to take over its body at will, but all other animals impose a difficulty on the activation roll equal to their Intelligence. If the animal is a nemean, the difficulty is multiplied by (nemean's Legend + 1).

ANIMAL FEATURE (ANIMAL •••••)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Animal Ken

Cost: 1 Willpower + (1 Legend per feature)

The Scion can change a portion of his anatomy to a shape matching the analogous portion of his chosen animal's anatomy for one scene. If his chosen animal is an armadillo, he can cover himself in a flexible armor. If his animal is a monkey, he can grow a long prehensile tail that is as dexterous as a hand with no thumb. If his animal is a spider or gecko, he can change the surfaces of his hands and feet to enable himself to climb on walls. If his animal is a bird or bat or airborne insect, he can transform his arms into wings that allow him to fly at a rate equal to his Move rate. The exact effect of the change is up to the player, dependent upon Storyteller approval. As a general guideline, though, if the change boosts some trait or grants bonus dice on a special attack, the total bonus value granted cannot be greater than the character's Legend.

The character can take on one feature from his chosen animal per five successes on the activation roll. He can take on as many separate animal features from the same animal as his successes on a single activation roll allow. If the player has purchased this Boon multiple times to represent several different animals, the character can take on features from all those different types of animals simultaneously, but he must make the activation roll separately for each type of animal. The total trait bonuses he can receive from all those features still cannot exceed his Legend.

Reverting to normal, either at will or at the end of the scene, is instantaneous.

ANIMAL FORM (ANIMAL ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Animal Ken

Cost: 1 Willpower + 1 Legend

In one action (Speed 5, DV -1), the character transforms into a specimen of his chosen animal. The character's Physical Attributes are normal for a mundane specimen of the animal he's become, but his Mental Attributes remain his own. He also retains access to his Epic Mental Attributes and Knacks, though his other Epic Attributes are off limits until he regains his human form. He can communicate with other animals of his type. Other Scions who use Animal Communication can understand him perfectly clearly. He is immune to other Scions' uses of Animal Command or Ride Animal.

If the player has purchased this Boon several times to represent different animals, the character can change from one animal form directly to another, but the player must make the roll and spend the points anew for each change. While a character is using this Boon, he cannot use Animal Feature or Animal Aspect.

CREATE ANIMAL (ANIMAL ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: (1 Willpower + 1 lethal health level) per act of creation; 1 Legend per set of units

By spending one Willpower point and inflicting one lethal health level of damage on himself, the Scion can create mundane animals of his chosen type from his very

blood. Such animals are as loyal to him as those granted by the Creatures Birthright, and he can automatically command them mentally. They follow any command the Scion gives them to the best of their ability, and they last for one scene before dissolving into nothingness once again.

To grant the creatures solidity, the Scion must pay a number of Legend points relative to the creature's size. Doing so allows him to create a number of units of the creature per Legend point spent, as follows:

Creatures	Units per Legend Point Spent
Speck creatures (ant)	100
Tiny creatures (grasshopper)	50
Small creatures (raven)	10
Modest creatures (wolf)	2
Normal creatures (lion)	1/2
Large creatures (horse)	1/4
Huge creatures (elephant)	1/5
Enormous creatures (sperm whale)	1/10

(Where *exactly* a creature not listed falls on this table is up to the Storyteller's judgment.)

A character need not create the maximum number of units per Legend point spent, but he cannot create an incomplete portion of an animal. If he intends to produce a creature whose unit value is listed as a fraction, he must spend more Legend points to produce a single animal. (For instance, it takes five Legend points to create one elephant. If the character doesn't have five Legend points to spend, he can't create an elephant.)

If the character has taken this Boon multiple times to represent several types of animals, each act of creation is separate and requires a separate expenditure of Willpower and sacrifice of one lethal health level.

CHAOS

Demigods who practice these Boons are fearsome unpredictability incarnate. The only thing most Scions count in such demigods' favor is that at least they aren't working with the Titans... right?

Associated With: Dionysus, Kalfu, Loki, Set, Susano-o

SABOT (CHAOS • • • •)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Craft

Cost: 1 Willpower

The Scion can break even the most complicated machine with just the power of her mind. She just stares at the machine in question and her player spends a Willpower and rolls (Intelligence + Craft). If the roll succeeds, the character causes the machine to break down and cease functioning immediately. The number of successes the roll generated then lingers until the machine is repaired. In order to repair the object, a character must accumulate an equal number of successes on an extended (Dexterity + Craft) roll.

A Scion can use this Boon on a given object only once at a time. That is, she cannot use Sabot on the same object a second time until it has been fully repaired from her first application of the Boon. Also, this Boon works only on complex machines, not simple ones. (Sabot won't make an inclined plane suddenly not work.) It doesn't work on machines crafted by characters of higher Legend.

RECURRING DISTRACTION (CHAOS • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy

Cost: 1 Legend per point of penalty

The Scion sings a chorus from a silly song (any Ray Stevens tune will do) or makes some awful witticism (such as, "A good pun is its own reword.") and uses this Boon to stick that random bit of inanity into the mind of every person who hears and understands her when she does it. Resisting the effect requires a (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll that nets more successes than the Scion's player rolled. Those who cannot resist the effect suffer a distraction penalty to all rolls equal to the number of Legend points the Scion's player spent to activate the effect (up to a maximum equal to that Scion's Legend). This distraction lasts for 24 hours.

CRAWLING CHAOS (CHAOS • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy

Cost: 1 Willpower + 3 Legend

This Boon inflicts a nastier version of Paralyzing Confusion (Chaos • • •). Its effects last longer and are transmissible. The Scion activates it just as she activates Paralyzing Confusion (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 140), subject to the same restrictions based on relative Legend. The first person she targets suffers the effects for one hour per dot of Legend the Scion has. The seething riot of contradictory thoughts also erases the victim's memory of events for the same amount of time before the Boon affected him.

When the next hapless victim comes close enough to see and recognize the first victim, she too suffers the effect as if the Scion had targeted her with it. The next person who comes along after that and sees either one of them is likewise subject to the effect. Anyone who can see an affected victim clearly enough to recognize that victim (regardless of whether the witness actually knows the victim personally) is subject to the effect. It doesn't matter if the new victim is looking at a previous victim through binoculars, a sniper scope or on a live broadcast. Only characters with an equal or greater Legend than the Scion who used the Boon stand a chance to resist this mental paralysis, as they're the only ones whose players actually get a roll to resist.

The Scion who used the Boon remains immune to the transmission of her own effect. Resisting the effect once

with a successful (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll is proof against it thereafter from every affected party until the duration lapses. Fortunately for everyone involved, the paralysis lasts only as long as it affects the initial victim. No matter how widespread the effect is, when the initial victim snaps out of it, everyone else does too.

INSTANT RIOT (CHAOS ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Presence

Cost: 1 Willpower + 5 Legend

The Scion stands before a crowd and shouts some incendiary catch phrase such as, "Remember Kent State!", "Rangers lead the way!" or "See you all in Sto-Va-Kor!" (Whatever's appropriate to the circumstances.) If the activation roll succeeds, a riot breaks out. Five people per success on the roll immediately lose all sense of decorum and civility and start wrecking the joint. They work together en masse, to cause property damage and to chase down and attack hapless victims who don't go with the flow. (Such victims usually include people who flee the chaos rather than wholeheartedly joining the mob, as well as the riot cops who inevitably have to deal with the rioters' shenanigans.)

The riot carries on for a number of hours equal to the Scion's Legend, unless the police manage to put a stop to it sooner. Anyone who participates in the madness retains full memory of every awful thing he or she did, and the shameful memory wipes out all of a rioter's Willpower points for the week following the riot. Generally, only mortals will allow themselves to be swept along in the riot, but titanspawn and opportunistic Scions might decide to ride the wave too. (Doing so still wipes out their Willpower afterward.)

Scions who practice the Chaos Purview must have a higher Legend than the one who incited the riot in order for Eye of the Storm (Chaos •) to protect them from the rioters.

DARKNESS

Demigods who practice this Purview become wardens of humankind's deepest primordial fear. Titanspawn and other horrors might be the beasts that go bump in the night, but demigods with these Boons *are* the night.

Associated With: Baron Samedi, Hades, Izanami, Kalfu, Tezcatlipoca, Tsuki-yomi

SHADOW STEP (DARKNESS ••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion can step into one shadow and emerge instantly from any shadow within his line of sight. Doing so costs one Legend but doesn't interrupt his action. He can draw a bow and walk backward into one shadow then instantly emerge from another shadow somewhere else and fire his arrow just as easily as if he had made a normal Move action before firing.

The only catch is that the shadows through which the Scion moves must be large enough to accommodate his entire body.

SHADOW CRAFT (DARKNESS •••••)

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Art

Cost: 1 Willpower or (1 Legend + 1 Willpower)

This Boon allows for two effects. First, the Scion can change the shape of a projected shadow in any way he sees fit as long as A.) he's touching it and B.) he maintains the shadow's original surface area in the finished shape. He can move the shadow around in defiance of ambient light sources, break it into bits and bend and stretch it any way he wants. Doing so costs only one Willpower point, and the shape in which he leaves the shadow remains thus for a number of hours equal to his Legend. The complexity of the finished image determines the number of successes necessary.

The second effect costs one Willpower and one Legend. The character reaches into the nearest shadow, thinks of an item he needs but does not have and pulls out just such an item made of solid shadow. Items retrieved thus must be relatively simple and not mechanical. The most complex item a Scion could produce would be a plain longbow with a stout shadow string (using the traits of a hankyu—see **Scion: Hero**, p. 203). The most common items Scions create with this Boon are weapons, but wrenches, ropes, chairs, doorstops, flutes, shields, fans and all manner of simple objects are possible. The objects are just as sturdy and useful as their material counterparts, and they can withstand even the brightest direct light. The Scion may create as many objects as his player's successes on the activation roll allow, as follows:

Item	Required Successes
5 arrows	1
10 feet of rope	1
flute	1
knife	1
hankyu	2
sword	2
oar	3
spear	3
bench	4
canoe	6

(The cost for items of comparable size should roughly conform to this table, guided by the Storyteller's common sense.)

Anyone who can use a mundane version of the item can use the shadow version just as well, though finding a loose one in the dark might be a problem for someone without Night Eyes (Darkness •). The Scion can activate this Boon only once per scene, and if he's creating more

than one item at a time, he has to keep pulling them out of the shadow and either stacking them up or passing them out. If he stops for more than a minute, the effect ends, regardless of how many successes' worth of items he can still produce.

SHADOW SHROUD (DARKNESS ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Strength

Cost: 1 Willpower + 3 Legend

The character sweeps his arms about him in a savage gesture that literally tears the light out of the air. As a result, a maximum semispherical area with a radius in yards equal to (roll successes x 5) becomes pitch black. Only characters with Night Eyes can see anything within the area of effect. This darkness lasts as long as the Scion stays in the area of effect and wills it to remain. Direct sunlight dissolves the shroud of darkness, but only slowly. Each hour of direct sunlight reduces the radius of the effect by 10 yards.

SHADOW BODIES (DARKNESS ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Presence

Cost: 1 Willpower + 5 Legend

The Scion wraps a nearby shadow around his body as his player makes the roll and spends the points. The shadow conforms to the Scion's body, rendering him a tangible, though unrecognizable, three-dimensional silhouette. Then, for every five successes the player got on the activation roll, a semi-tangible shadow duplicate steps out of the Scion's tenebrous form. Each duplicate has the Scion's same mundane Physical Attributes and the same ratings in Abilities that represent physical acumen. These semi-solid duplicates can wield physical weapons or ones created with Shadow Craft (Darkness •••••). They are immune to bashing damage, but lethal and aggravated damage affects them as normal.

All of the shadow duplicates must remain within the Scion's line of sight. The Scion doesn't literally have to be able to see a duplicate, one can stand behind him, for instance, but if a duplicate leaves the Scion's line of sight, it ceases to exist. Each duplicate the Scion controls must perform roughly the same action—all of them acting based on the Scion's player's Join Battle roll. Duplicates arrange themselves minimally so as not to get in each other's way, but they must either perform the same action as their counterparts or perform no action. (They can perform the same action against different targets, though.) The Scion can perform a different action from what all of his shadow duplicates are doing, or he can make one group of duplicates perform a different action from what he

and the rest are doing. He must split his action as per a standard multiple action, though, with the concomitant dice pool penalties. When the shadow bodies are performing the same action in combat against the same target, they are automatically assumed to be performing a coordinated assault (see **Scion: Hero** p. 190).

Only someone using Night Eyes can tell which form is the Scion and which is a duplicate. Also, if a shadow body is hiding inside a shadow cast by ambient lighting, it is indistinguishable from the background. Finally, if a Scion has Shadow Step (Darkness • • • •), any one of the shadow bodies present is a suitable shadow portal through which to step. Direct sunlight inflicts one unsoakable level of lethal damage on a shadow duplicate per 10 seconds of exposure. The Scion is not affected by this damage.

Despite the similarities, these shadow bodies are not the same as titanspawn shinobi (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 322) created by the power of the Titan Mikaboshi. This subtlety can easily be lost on Scions in the heat of the moment, though.

DEATH

Demigods with this Purview never lose sight of the power of the entropy and finality inherent in mortality. The less they have to fear from death, the better they can use it as a weapon against their foes.

(For this Purview's purposes, its Boons affect ghosts and spectres the same way.)

Associated With: Anubis, Baron Samedi, Hades, Hel, Huitzilopochtli, Izanami, Miclántecuhtli, Odin, Osiris, Xipe Totec

SUMMON GHOST (DEATH • • • •)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Occult

Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion mystically calls out to a ghost and commands its immediate presence. To do so, the Scion either holds some item the dead person held dear or holds hands with a blood relative of the deceased as she speaks the ghost's full name aloud. The ghost automatically hears the call, no matter how far away from the Scion it is. It may resist the summons with a (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll. If the Scion's player's roll gets more successes than the ghost's, the ghost disappears from wherever it was and reappears before the Scion. When it arrives, it is under no compulsion to materialize for any witnesses or to even acknowledge the Scion's attention.

A Scion can attempt to summon a particular ghost only once per scene. A ghost cannot be summoned across a ward or an unbroken line of salt.

MOTHER'S TOUCH (DEATH • • • • •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend

A Scion with Death Senses (Death •) can see, hear and touch ghosts that won't or can't materialize, but the sense of touch that that Boon grants is illusory at best. If the Scion tries to exert enough pressure to cause damage or restrain the ghost, her hand passes through its body. With Mother's Touch, however—named by Scions of Izanami—the Scion charges her body with flickering strands of black energy that can contain or disrupt a ghost's intangible body. This energy is visible only to ghosts and those who can see ghosts, and the Scion can extend its aura to surround any item in her hands. A measure of the energy even travels with any projectile the Scion throws or fires from an item in her possession, though it dissipates when the projectile comes to rest.

When the Scion spends one point of Legend, this black energy surrounds her for one scene. During that scene, she can grapple ghosts as effectively as she can grapple physical foes, and her attacks inflict lethal damage on them. (This damage is "lethal" only inasmuch as a ghost has a soak equal to only half his Stamina against it.) If the Scion attacks a mortal who is possessed by a ghost, roll the raw damage separately against the mortal and the ghost. The mortal and the ghost soak the respective results separately.

EXORCISM (DEATH • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Occult

Cost: 1 Willpower

The Scion can either expel a single ghost from a mortal host it's possessing, hurl it from the World altogether, or repel a group of ghosts from the immediate area. To rid a host of its possessor, the Scion need only make eye contact with the mortal, touch him on the chest with her open palm and shout "Begone!" If the Scion's player rolls more successes than the ghost's did to possess the body, the ghost is expelled and cannot possess anyone else for the rest of the scene. To fling a ghost from the World to the Underworld, the Scion does the same as she would to expel a ghost from a mortal host but touches the ghost's incorporeal flesh instead. The ghost's player resists this effect with a (Strength + Athletics) roll as the ghost's essence clings to the World with all its might. If the Scion's player rolls more successes, the ghost is hurled back to the underworld whence it came—or, perhaps deep into the rubble that the blocks the nearest pathway there. It cannot return for a number of days equal to the Scion's Legend.

If the Scion attempts to drive back a horde of ghosts, she claps her hands (which rings like thunder in the ghosts' ears) and shouts "Begone!" For every three successes her player gets on the activation roll, she hurls one ghost back from her. Each ghost is dematerialized and thrown backward 10 yards per dot of Legend the Scion has. Thereafter, the ghost can come no closer to the Scion than that for a number of hours equal to the Scion's Legend.

HAUNTED MISTS (DEATH ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Willpower + 1 Legend

The Scion takes a deep breath and exhales a billowing white mist that sinks to the ground and flows outward to cover the surrounding area in a knee-deep blanket. Doing so renders her inactive for five ticks per dot of Legend she has. This area has a radius equal to one yard per dot of Legend the Scion has. (That's roughly 1,800 square feet at the minimum.) The mist lasts for the rest of the scene, and while it remains, ghosts that enter the affected area cannot leave it or be forced out of it. Worse (for them), they become fully material and cannot dematerialize. They can still use whatever ghostly powers they have at their disposal, as well as their Attributes and Abilities.

If a Scion uses a power or performs an action that ought to hurl the ghost bodily out of the misty area, the ghost stops at the perimeter of the area as if it had hit a wall.

EARTH

This Purview encompasses everything from the tallest wind-blunted mountaintop to the most parched desert floor, and the demigods who practice its Boons can shape it all, nearly by will alone.

Associated With: Baron Samedi, Geb, Hades, Hephaestus, Izanami, Osiris, Poseidon, Quetzalcoátl, Tlaloc, Tlazoltéotl

EARTH ARMOR (EARTH ••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion stomps a foot or pounds a fist on the bare earth, and a thick cloud of particles of the substance rises into the air around him. This cloud swirls around him and accumulates on his body like a suit of plate armor plus helmet. Any earthen substance will suffice, from gravel to mud to sand.

The armor the coating of particles creates has a bashing and lethal Hardness and soak equal to half the Scion's Legend (rounded up), as well as a mobility penalty equal to that of riot gear (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 204). It lasts for the rest of the scene, at the end of which it shatters into a million pieces and falls at the Scion's feet. A Scion with Shaping (Earth •••) can craft the armor into a stylized shape, but only if the Scion wearing the armor remains inactive long enough to allow it.

EARTH TRAVEL (EARTH •••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion can reflexively sink into the bare earth or stone or metal and move through it like a swimmer through water. The Scion can move only through a volume of earth large enough to accommodate his entire body. Also, unless the Scion has Safely Interred (Earth •), he can remain within the earth for only as long as he can hold his breath. If he stays under longer, he begins to drown. While he's under, the Scion instinctively knows his way to the nearest air.

EARTH BODY (EARTH ••••• •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend or (3 Legend + 1 Willpower)

The Scion slams his fists together and calls out the name of a type of stone or metal, while his player spends the points and makes the roll. (It doesn't matter which stone or metal it is, except aesthetically.) When he does so, his body instantly changes into a statue made of that material. Becoming a statue thus offers an all-purpose Hardness value equal to the character's Legend, and adds a like value to his bashing and lethal soak. The transformation also adds 15 pounds per dot of Legend he has to the character's weight. He can still move and support his weight despite what limits his Strength might impose, but structures and other people might not be able to do so as easily. This transformation lasts for one scene at most.

If the player spends only one Legend to make this transformation, the character becomes an immobile statue. He can still see, hear and smell things as normal, but he can't move. Nor can he be distinguished from a mundane statue except that he's immune to the Earth Boons of Scions with lower Legend. If the player wants the character's stone body to be able to move while it's transformed, he must spend three Legend points and a Willpower point as well. (He may make up the difference in costs at any point during the effect's duration to go from being an immobile statue to a mobile one.) Doing so allows him to move as normal, up to the full limit of his Dexterity and Epic Dexterity. His freedom of motion doesn't change his increased weight, though, so if he doesn't have such Knacks as Divine Balance or Spider Climber (see p. 56), the fragility of the environment could severely curtail his movement.

LANDSLIDE (EARTH ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Strength + Craft

Cost: 1 Willpower + 3 Legend

Moving his arms like the conductor of a symphony orchestra, the Scion can mentally change the shape of any bare earth or stone within his line of sight, out to a range of 50 yards per dot of Legend he has. He can make jagged spars of stone thrust up from the surface, or he can open yawning crevices beneath the feet of his enemies. He can hollow out a depression suitable for the site of a mass grave or raise an earthen wall to keep hooligans at bay. He can detach a sheet of earth from a hillside to send it crashing down, or he can halt such a landslide in its tracks and force it to rejoin the earth beneath it.

The Scion can reshape five cubic yards of earth per success his player gets on the activation roll at a time (including any bonus successes from Epic Strength). He remains in mental control of the earth for one scene. If a second Scion attempts to wrest control of the earth from the first, an opposed activation roll is called for. Whoever gets the most successes on a single roll governs the range and intensity of the effect for the scene. When the duration elapses, whatever shape the earth is in is the shape in which it remains unless gravity changes things.

FERTILITY

This Purview deals with nature's green and growing bounty. It doesn't affect the concept of fertility that refers to animal reproduction, but its reach goes beyond basic plants (see **Scion: Hero,** p. 142).

Associated With: Amaterasu, Dionysus, Freya, Freyr, Geb, Hachiman, Isis, Osiris, Quetzalcoátl, Sif, Sobek, Tlaloc, Xipe Totec

NATURAL CAMOUFLAGE (FERTILITY • • • •)

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Stealth

Cost: 1 Legend

When the Scion hides in her verdant element, it's almost impossible to find her. Her skin sprouts grass, bark, underbrush, flowers, mushrooms or what have you that allow her to blend in seamlessly with her natural surroundings. As long as she doesn't move or otherwise draw attention to herself, mundane attempts to find or track her fail automatically. A mortal hunter with a trusty hound could walk right over the Scion's disguised back and never know she was there.

Hunters of supernatural prowess fare only a little better. Those with the Epic Perception Knack Predatory Focus (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 134) or a Survival Arete can attempt to track the hidden Scion's movements, their players rolling (Perception + Survival) against the hiding Scion's activation roll. Even if they get more successes than the Scion's player did, though, the hunters find only the general area in which the Scion is hiding. (They come to an area within a number of yards equal to the Scion's Legend but lose track of her unless she moves again.) Only hunters with the Supernal Hunter Knack (see p. 64) are actually skilled enough to find a Scion who's using this Boon to hide (and only if their rolls garner more successes than the Scion's).

For this Boon to work, the hiding Scion must be in a natural environment, such as a forest, a meadow, a swamp, a marsh, a kelp bed or the like. If there are no plants around, the Scion cannot hide there. This camouflage changes to match the immediate surroundings, and it lasts for as long as the Scion wills.

TWIST PLANTS (FERTILITY • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Survival

Cost: 2 Legend

The Scion imagines a specific shape she wants the nearby plant life to take, and her will makes it so. On a successful (Intelligence + Survival) roll, the Scion affects a number of large plants (or a number of square yards of a patch of smaller plants) equal to the successes the roll achieved. Before her eyes, the plants bend as her imagination desires and set in the new arrangement—after which they continue to grow as normal. The Scion can't move the plants around fast enough or with enough finesse to attack people, but she can weave them into bindings or cages to hold people who aren't moving. Alternatively, she could twist nearby trees and underbrush into a comfortable shelter for herself or cause the surroundings to lay a false impression to throw pursuers off her trail (which would impose a penalty equal to her Legend on the pursuers' tracking rolls). She could even weave a thick bed of seaweed into a handy canoe.

The feasibility and efficacy of the shape the character designs is up to the player and Storyteller to work out. As a general guideline, bear in mind that the Boon can cause plants to twist in ways that would normally be impossible, but it can't cause them to tear themselves apart or physically grow or shrink. Also, if the new shape imposes some sort of penalty on characters who enter the affected area, that penalty can be no greater than the Scion's Legend. The shaping effect takes one minute to complete, and a character can use this Boon no more than once per scene.

ACCELERATE GROWTH (FERTILITY • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Survival

Cost: 1–5 Legend

With this Boon, the Scion can cause a plant or area of plants to grow to its maximum size in a dramatically reduced time. The Boon affects a number of acres of plants equal to the Scion's Legend. The more Legend points spent to fuel this effect, the quicker the affected plants grow. For one Legend point, the plants grow as much in a minute as they would in a month. For two Legend points, the plants grow as much in a minute as they would in a season. For three Legend points, the plants grow as much in a minute as they would in a year. For four Legend points, the plants grow as much in a minute as they would in a decade. For five Legend points, the plants grow as much in a minute as they would in a century.

The number of successes the player gets on the roll determines the number of minutes the Scion is able to make the plants grow at their accelerated rate. When a plant in the affected area has reached its maximum

sustainable size, it stops growing and remains in cellular stasis until the entire effect has ended. When the effect ends, the affected plants survive as they normally would under their present environmental conditions, unless the Scion uses other Fertility Boons on them. From that point forward, they live for as long as they normally would have if they had not been accelerated—which can seriously throw seasonal crop cycles out of whack if the Scion isn't careful. Once they reach their natural maximum size, they won't ever get noticeably bigger, regardless of how much longer than normal they might live.

The character can use this Boon no more than once per scene, and the plants must actually be present in some form (even as seeds beneath layers of wildfire devastation) for the Scion to accelerate their growth.

VERDANT CREATION (FERTILITY ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Survival

Cost: 1 Willpower + 3 Legend

The Scion can cause plants to spontaneously generate out of nothing at all. Regardless of the weather, soil conditions, sunlight exposure or any other factor, plants of the Scion's choosing spring into existence at her silent command. This Boon generates a number of large plants (or a number of square yards of a patch of smaller plants) equal to the successes achieved on the roll plus the Scion's Legend. These plants take root (literally or figuratively) with the same hardiness as if the Scion had used Green Thumb (Fertility •) on them all, with the added benefit that the plants don't have to be in an environment that is within their normal tolerances to survive. The Scion could grow mushrooms on the desert floor or cause rose bushes to thrive in a submerged cave off the continental shelf. Per Green Thumb, these created plants survive for one year under any conditions barring blight or physical destruction by living creatures. When that year is up, they react to their surroundings as normal plants of their type would. In the meantime, they are as susceptible to other Fertility Boons as any normal plants are.

FIRE

The raw power of this classical element cannot be denied. With it, a demigod can wreak untold destruction or simply clear away that which would poison the thriving earth were it left to linger.

Associated With: Hephaestus, Loki, Ogoun, Ptah

BLAZING WEAPON (FIRE ••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend per weapon

The Scion reaches into a flame that's at least as big as a campfire and pulls out a blazing melee weapon made of flickering fire. The weapon can be of any shape and size, but the distinction is largely a matter of personal taste, rather than available traits. These weapons do not use the normal traits from the chart on page 202 of **Scion: Hero**. Instead, when the character removes the weapon from the fire, the player receives a base number of points equal to the Scion's Legend for each weapon. These points can add to a base Accuracy +0, Damage +0 and Defense -1, and they can subtract from a starting

Speed 6 (reducing it to a minimum of 1). The player assigns the weapon's traits as the character produces the weapon, and he can't change them afterward.

The character can create more than one weapon at a time from the same fire, but only characters with Fire Immunity (Fire •) or some other means of handling fire without getting hurt can actually use them. These weapons inflict no harm on characters with Fire Immunity.

If the character already has a melee weapon, he can instead expose it to a fire at least as big as a candle flame and cause the fire to wrap around the weapon and enhance it. Doing so allows his player to temporarily divide up a number of points equal to his Legend and use them to enhance a weapon's Accuracy, Damage and Defense. He can likewise enhance a compatriot's melee weapon, but only if that character has Fire Immunity or some other means of handling fire without being harmed.

Either way, the blazing weapons inflict lethal damage and can set inflammable materials (such as wood, gasoline or clothing) alight. The flame weapons or flaming enhancements last for a single scene, after which point they disappear in a puff of smoke. Melee weapons augmented by this Boon suffer no ill effects from the fire that enhances them.

FLAME TRAVEL (FIRE •••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion can leap into any fire he can get to and instantly emerge from either another fire within his line of sight or one upon which he has used Bolster Fire (Fire ••) in the scene. The fires he enters and exits must be at least as big around as he is. The Scion doesn't actually touch either fire through which he travels, so he doesn't necessarily have to have Fire Immunity to use this Boon. He emerges right beside the fire through which he exits, though, so heat and smoke are factors to consider.

INFERNO (FIRE ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Craft

Cost: 3 Legend

With a shouted word, a Scion can cause an area in his line of sight to instantly burst into flame. The flame has the intensity of a bonfire (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 184), and it covers an area with a radius in yards equal to the number of successes on the activation roll. The flames stand as high from a flat surface as the Scion is tall. This fire can burn without fuel for a number of minutes equal to the Scion's Legend. When that time is up, the flames go out if they still don't have any fuel. People who are within the area the Scion intends to set alight get a single chance to escape the affected area unharmed before the fire starts. To do so, their players must get more successes on a (Dexterity + Athletics) roll than the Scion's player got on the activation roll, and the character must be able to get out of the area in one action.

The Scion can use this Boon as many times consecutively in the same scene as he has Legend to pay for it. Stacking flames in the overlapping section of two or more areas of effect has no additive effect on the intensity of the fire. The area of effect can take any shape the Scion chooses, from a simple circle to an area that conforms to a room's floor layout to a silhouette of a hand flipping someone the bird. The Scion cannot change the area of effect's shape once the fire is burning.

DEVIL BODY (FIRE ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Willpower + 3 Legend

Upon activating this Boon, the character's body immediately becomes a human-shaped pillar of white-hot flame. His features are unrecognizable except in silhouette (if he has a distinctive silhouette), and his voice has the quality of a roaring bonfire.

In this form, the character's merest touch can set things alight or burn flesh. Touching the character inflicts a number of levels of lethal damage equal to his Legend. If the character physically attacks someone, the player adds that many extra levels of lethal damage to the results of his damage roll. The flames of the Scion's body can even burn a fellow Scion who has Fire Immunity (Fire •) if that Scion's Legend is lower, though the lesser Scion suffers automatic fire damage equal to only the difference in their Legend ratings. The character's semi-solid form also absorbs an amount of damage equal to the character's Legend from all physical attacks.

While he's in this form, the Scion can climb up or across any inflammable surface—a set of hanging vines, a tapestry, a large monster's dangling hair—as if he had the Spider Climber Knack (see p. 56) but without the Legend cost. Climbing on the surface automatically sets it on fire, however. If the Scion does not already have Fire Immunity, he enjoys its effects while he's in this form. Also, if he has Flame Travel (Fire •••••), he doesn't have to jump into a present flame before emerging from another one—he counts as the entrance flame. Other characters with Flame Travel can use him as either the entrance or exit flame.

Finally, a character can throw an unending supply of fire projectiles at distant targets with successful (Dexterity + Thrown) rolls. These projectiles have Accuracy +0, Damage +10L and Range 10—though Epic Strength can change the latter dramatically. Scions with Fire Immunity are immune to these projectiles' damage regardless of how their Legend compares to that of the character using Devil Body.

The character remains in this form for one scene at maximum.

GUARDIAN

Whether his motivations are noble or are rooted in vain selfishness, the protection of a demigod with this Purview's Boons is a force to be reckoned with.

Associated With: Anubis, Baldur, Erzulie, Hachiman, Heimdall, Huitzilopochtli, Isis, Miclántecuhtli, Quetzalcoátl, Raiden, Set, Thor, Xipe Totec

UNSEEN SHIELD (GUARDIAN ••••)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Fortitude

Cost: 2 Legend + 1 Willpower

The Scion concentrates and projects an invisible, semi-spherical shield of pure force around herself and those she's trying to protect. The base of this shield can be as big as 500 square feet in area (about 13 feet in radius) per dot of Legend the character has, though she can keep it smaller. Ghosts, spirits and physical beings of lesser Legend than the Scion cannot penetrate this shield. If such a being has an equal or higher Legend rating (and can bring a physical force to bear), it can attempt to batter the shield apart with physical attacks. The shield can take a number of health levels of damage equal to [the Scion's (Legend x 5) + activation roll successes], and it has an all-purpose Hardness rating equal to the Scion's Legend.

Unless some enemy's effort shatters it, the shield lasts for one scene. Once the Scion produces it, she can move around freely within. She can also adjust the shield's size during the scene, though moving the boundary exerts a physical force that pushes people and objects in contact with it.

COME RUNNING (GUARDIAN •••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 3 Legend

The Scion immediately rushes to the aid of anyone or anything on whom she has placed a Vigil Brand (Guardian •). When she gets a sensation that her branded charge is in danger (as determined by the Storyteller), she may spend three Legend points to disappear from her current location and instantly reappear in view of the brand she laid down. It helps to concentrate long enough for the player to make the (Perception + Empathy) roll to get an idea of what the danger is before she disappears, but it's not necessary. Yet, while the character can use Vigil Brand to check up on a charge at any time, the Scion can use Come Running only when the charge in question is in imminent danger.

CONFER KNACK (GUARDIAN ••••• •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Willpower + 3 Legend

The Scion can bestow on a mortal in her care any Epic Stamina Knack she possesses. To do so, the Scion must have the mortal ingest at least a trace amount of her ichor, which can be found in any of a Scion's bodily fluids. When the mortal has done so, the Scion blesses him, and her player spends the necessary points to confer the Knack. The mortal receives the attendant benefits and protection of the Knack for a number of days equal to the Scion's Legend.

The Scion must actually have the Knack she intends to bestow, and she does not lose the benefits of the Knack herself when she gives them to someone else. She can confer only one Knack on a given person at a time, and a mortal can have only one Knack conferred on him at a time. The Scion can confer as many single Knacks on as many different people as she can afford to, though. What she can't do is confer a Knack that has a prerequisite Knack.

The Scion can confer Knacks only on mortal human beings. Any conferred Knack that requires a Legend-point expenditure requires a Willpower expenditure from a mortal instead. For Knacks that provide benefits based on the user's Legend, assume that a mortal gifted thus has a Legend rating of at least 1.

CONFER IMMUNITY (GUARDIAN ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Willpower dot

Several Purviews grant as a first-dot Boon an all-out immunity to the element to which they pertain. With this Boon, a Scion who enjoys such protection from some such an element may grant it to a mortal of her choosing, whom she has already marked with Vigil Brand (Guardian •). To confer the immunity, she must first have the recipient ingest a trace amount of her ichor, as with Confer Knack (Guardian ••••• •). Then the Scion's player must sacrifice one dot of Willpower. (The player can buy it back later, but only after the end of the current story.) When that's done, the Scion need only touch the Birthright relic through which she channels the immunity's Purview to the Vigil Brand of the recipient.

The Scion can confer only one immunity on a given mortal, and a mortal can have only one immunity conferred on him at a time. The mortal does not need a Birthright relic to enjoy his immunity, but the immunity is not permanent. It lasts only a number of years equal to the Scion's Legend at the time she confers it.

The specific one-dot Boons a Scion can confer on a mortal with this Boon include the following: Eye of the Storm (Chaos •), Night Eyes (Darkness •), Safely Interred (Earth •), Fire Immunity (Fire •), Sky's Grace* (Sky •), Water Breathing (Water •).

(* If a Scion confers Sky's Grace on a mortal, only the aspect of it that allows a character to survive falls of

any height actually applies to the mortal. This aspect alone requires no expenditure from the character—he simply drifts safely to the ground when he falls from a height greater than that of how high he can jump.)

HEALTH

Using this Purview, a demigod tends to the physical well-being of beasts, mortals or other Scions. He could even apply these Boons' effects to titanspawn or other supernatural creatures, but he can never use these Boons on himself. Supernaturally resisting damage or healing himself falls under the auspice of his Epic Stamina.

Associated With: Apollo, Artemis, Athena, Baron Samedi, Damballa, Freya, Freyr, Hera, Isis, Quetzalcoátl, Tlaloc, Xipe Totec

CRADLESONG (HEALTH ••••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Medicine

Cost: 1 Legend (or 1 Legend + 1 Willpower)

By singing or playing some sweet lullaby, the Scion makes a number of people equal to the successes on the activation roll drift quietly off to sleep. Characters of higher Legend than the singer are not affected. Those of equal Legend get to oppose the activation roll with a (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll. This soporific effect knocks out any living creature that can hear the Scion's voice, for a number of hours equal to the Scion's Legend. Victims with no Legend rating remain asleep the whole time, never waking up regardless of what's going on around them. Characters with a Legend rating can be woken up by those who went unaffected, if the player of the character trying to rouse the sleeper makes more successes on an extended (Manipulation + Medicine) action to bring the sleeper around. (Such an action constitutes shaking the sleeping person, slapping his cheeks, pinching him, hollering at him or whatever else might wake him from a dead sleep.) Suffering a level of lethal or aggravated damage will also wake a sleeper with a Legend rating.

If prospective victims are engaged in relatively normal behavior—working at their desks, walking on patrol, raking leaves—using this Boon costs only one Legend point. If the intended victims are engaged in combat or some other strenuous undertaking—such as playing at a sport or making love with wild abandon—the Boon costs one Legend and one Willpower. The Scion cannot activate this Boon if he is participating strenuously in some activity himself. He must devote each action, instead, to calmly singing the song.

The activation of the Boon occurs in the character's first actual action (a Speed 5, DV -2 action), but the Scion may keep singing for as long as he likes if he has not yet affected a total number of people equal to his activation roll's successes. Once the character has affected the maximum number of people, though, the player must roll again (and pay the activation costs) if he wants to put a larger number of people to sleep. The effect targets those closest to the Scion first.

CONTROL AGING (HEALTH •••••)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Medicine

Cost: Varies

With a touch, the Scion can greatly slow down or accelerate a mortal's aging. So doing, he can either devastate an enemy with the ravages of time or bless a friend with nigh-eternal life. The more Legend points spent to fuel this effect, the quicker or slower the affected target ages. For one Legend point, the person ages one week in one day. For three Legend points, the person ages one month in one day. For five Legend points, the person ages one year in one day. For seven Legend points, the person ages one decade in one day. The number of successes the player gets on the roll determines the number of days the Scion is able to make the victim age at the accelerated rate.

The Scion can use this Boon on the same person only once per story, and he must spend the chosen number of Legend points at the moment of activation. He can't add Legend points in the middle of things to speed things up. The effects of accelerated aging are as follows:

Acceleration	Effect
Week per day	The character suffers a -2 fatigue penalty to all rolls.
Month per day	Previous effect, plus loses one dot from a Physical or Mental Attribute every week of real time. One dot returns per month of regular aging thereafter.
Year per day	Character suffers a -4 fatigue penalty on all rolls plus loses one Physical or Mental Attribute dot every week of real time. One dot returns per year of regular aging thereafter.
Decade per day	Character is bedridden until the effect wears off. He loses one Physical or Mental Attribute dot per day. Lost dots do not return.

The Scion could, alternatively, slow a mortal's aging considerably. The activation roll is the same. For one Legend point, the person ages the equivalent of one day in a month of real time. For three Legend points, the person ages the equivalent of one day in a year of real time. For five Legend points, the person ages the equivalent of one day in a decade of real time. For seven Legend points, the person ages the equivalent of one day in a century of real time. The number of successes determines how many equivalent days the person ages (i.e., how many successive intervals of the longer periods of time he goes barely aging at all).

A Scion can use this Boon only on mortals and animals with no Legend rating. Once such a creature has been affected, only a Scion with an equal or greater Legend can counteract the effect before its duration is up. To do so, that Scion's activation roll needs more successes than the roll of the one who first used this Boon. The second Scion must also spend an equal number of Legend points. Doing so cannot reverse the effects of accelerated or decelerated aging—demigods cannot turn back time—but the victim returns to his normal aging pace.

RESTORE/WITHER (HEALTH • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: None or (Intelligence + Medicine)

Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion can either heal the most terrible damage a patient suffers or inflict awful damage that's almost impossible to resist. The Scion need only touch his patient or victim and will that person's body to react. If the Scion chooses to heal and his patient is mortal, he can instantly heal all of a patient's bashing damage, heal three points of her lethal damage or heal one point of her aggravated damage. (This Boon can't bring a patient back from the dead, though.) Alternatively, the Scion can restore one lost or damaged body part or internal organ to its full functionality without a scar. From restoring an amputated leg to replacing a punctured eye to re-inflating a collapsed lung, the Scion can effect miraculous cures instantaneously.

If the Scion chooses to harm a mortal patient, his touch inflicts a point of aggravated damage instead. If he chooses, he can target that point of aggravated damage in such a way that an affected limb or non-vital organ withers and disintegrates. The aggravated damage will heal in its normal time, but the missing body part stays gone thereafter.

Mortals and lesser titanspawn cannot resist these effects. Their only chance to escape the damage (or the healing powers if they're so inclined) is to keep the Scion from touching them. If the Scion wishes to inflict this Boon's effects on an unwilling titanspawn with an equal or greater Legend or on an unwilling fellow Scion, however, the Scion's player must roll (Intelligence + Medicine) against the victim's (Stamina + Fortitude). If the victim's roll garners more successes, the Scion can inflict only a single level of lethal damage or heal only a single level of bashing damage. If the Scion's roll fails to get more successes, he can't inflict the withering effect at all.

HOLY FONT/EPIDEMIC (HEALTH • • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Medicine

Cost: 1 Legend or 1 Willpower

This Boon has the same effects as the Heal/Infect (Health • • •) Boon. With it, a Scion can either heal

or inflict bashing damage or either downgrade lethal damage to bashing or vice versa. The amount he can heal is still dependent on the roll results and which sort of point is spent to power it.

What changes is the fact that the Scion can affect a number of people equal to his (Legend x 3) with a single activation of the Boon. The number of times a single person can be affected by this Boon is still once per day, but the Scion can still use the power as many times in one day as he wants to (and can afford, of course).

JUSTICE

Demigod Scions who master these Boons become righteous judges or terrible avengers. They are the law; vengeance is theirs. Woe be unto each and every one who does wrong in such Scions' sight.

Associated With: Anubis, Athena, Geb, Horus, Osiris, Quetzalcoátl, Shango, Thoth, Tyr, Vidar, Zeus

DREAM WRACK (JUSTICE ••••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Empathy

Cost: 1 Willpower

The Scion gains the ability to plague a victim with torturous dreams of a recent crime and its aftermath. She stares into her target's eyes for a single action then names the victim, names the crime and says something to the effect of, "Now see how you like it"—except more dramatically eloquent than that.

When the perpetrator next sleeps, he dreams of the wrongdoing the Scion named and suffers through exactly what the victim of that crime suffered through, experiencing everything from the victim's perspective. The Scion who uses this Boon must know the gist of the events of the crime as well as the crime's aftermath, but she doesn't have to know all the details. The victim of the Boon will fill in any details he knows, even if the Scion doesn't know them, and his subconscious will color in the blank spots neither of them knows with information from his ugliest imaginings.

When he wakes, the target's Willpower pool is completely empty, and he can't regain any Willpower points for a number of days equal to the Scion's Legend. Each night, he dreams of the crime again, unable to wake and unable to escape.

The Scion can use this power on anyone she wants, regardless of whether they actually have any connection to the crime. The only restriction is that the Scion must know who the victim is, she must know the basic circumstances of the crime, and she must have some understanding of the crime's aftermath. Beyond that, she can afflict anyone she chooses with the awful dreams. On the upside, the Scion cannot affect the same character with this Boon again until the duration of the first effect wears off. What's more, beings of greater Legend can contest this Boon's activation roll with an (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll to ignore the effect altogether.

SCARLET LETTER (JUSTICE •••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Willpower + 1 Legend

When a Scion knows that a perpetrator is guilty of some wrongdoing—be it through the Judgment (Justice •) Boon, a judicious use of the Stench of Guilt and Blurt It Out Knacks or because she just has incontrovertible proof—she can make sure everyone else knows it too. She need only touch the exposed skin of the guilty party as her player spends the appropriate points. When she does, an arcane mark appears on the guilty person's flesh and will not wash off or fade away. No matter what the perpetrator does to his flesh—scar it irrevocably, tattoo over it, get a skin graft—the mark always rises to the top and remains clearly visible. Thereafter, whenever the Scion who put it there spends a point of Legend and commands him to do so, the criminal must draw attention to the mark and tell anyone who can see him why it was placed there.

The mark remains for a number of years equal to the Scion's Legend. The only thing that will get rid of it before then is if the Scion spends another Willpower and Legend to make it disappear. If the crime is especially heinous, though—or if she's a harsh bitch—the Scion can sacrifice a dot of Willpower instead of spending just a point along with her Legend point. Doing so makes the mark permanent, such that even she can't remove it.

SYMPATHY PAINS (JUSTICE ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Wits + Command

Cost: 1 Willpower + 1 Legend (+1 Legend per extra person)

When the Scion is in the middle of a confrontation that she wants to see ended with as little bloodshed as possible, she calls out in a stentorian voice and does whatever she must to get everyone's attention. Her player then rolls (Wits + Command) and spends a Willpower point. If the roll succeeds, the Scion ties together the physical health of as many people who are present as possible. That is, if one person in the group suffers any damage, *everyone* included in the effect suffers the same pain and damage. For the base cost, she can tie the health of two people together. She can include one extra person beyond that for every extra Legend point she spends at the same time. The effect lasts for a maximum number of days equal to the Scion's Legend.

This damage cuts through soak and armor and any defensive abilities a connected party might have. If the damage gets through all the defense and toughness of one person, it affects everyone equally. If one person in the affected group should die, everyone else in the group dies too, regardless of how many health levels they might have had left over. The Scion herself is the

only exception. Unless she is the victim whose death brings everyone else down with her, the effect ceases to apply to her if someone else in the circle dies. Other victims included in the effect have a chance to pull themselves out of the connection when another member dies as well. Doing so requires a successful (Stamina + Fortitude) roll at the moment the connected party dies. If that roll garners more successes than the Scion's activation roll did, the successful party does not die. He simply collapses unconscious with only one health box left empty.

PSYCHIC PRISON (JUSTICE ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Empathy

Cost: 3 Legend

The Scion stares into the victim's eyes for one minute without interruption. If the victim's player cannot get more successes on an opposing roll of the Scion's (Intelligence + Empathy) versus the victim's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend), the victim is rounded up by indistinct, faceless figures who drag him away and throw him into the cramped interior compartment of some sort of vehicle. The vehicle drives for a long time before it stops and the indistinct figures drag him out into the light. They throw him into a featureless gray cell with only a small slot in one wall through which they deliver food, and a grim-looking drain in the floor through which he must eliminate waste. This cell has one light source in the ceiling behind a translucent plastic panel that cannot be broken. There is no door. No one speaks to him. He sees no one. He hears no one except when voiceless figures approach to give him food. He can scream and thrash and bang his head against the walls, but nothing ever changes. Even if he has the Escape Artist Knack (see p. 56), he just winds up in another room exactly like the one he left. Things go on like this for a number of years equal to the Scion's (Legend x 5). Then one day, a door that wasn't there the day before opens. Light floods into the room, and the prisoner notices smells he hasn't smelled since before he came to this awful place. He stands on shaking legs and stumbles into the light...

...to find himself staring in the eyes of the Scion who imprisoned him. He comes to his senses to find that only minutes have actually passed—one minute per dot of his Scion captor's Legend. Every maddening minute of the years and years he spent imprisoned remains fresh in his memory, but now he's somehow got to get on with his life among all these other people after all that time alone.

For every 10 mental years the character spent imprisoned, he loses one dot from his Charisma, his Manipulation or his Willpower (captor's player's choice). This degradation cannot reduce one of these traits to less than one dot. As the character loses dots in those two Attributes, though, the maximum available number of dots of their related Epic Attributes decreases as well. The character doesn't lose the Epic Attribute dots too, but he can't use them until he gets a high enough number of dots in the mundane Attributes back. (He can still use all of his Knacks freely, though.)

Only the warden—i.e., the Scion who used this Boon—can set the victim free before his sentence is fully served. Every minute that goes by offers the Scion the opportunity to let her prisoner go free. No one can force her to decide in the prisoner's favor, though. It's entirely up to her.

MOON

The moon is ever changing, but constant also. It is serene, yet associated with unthinking madness. Its light is only a pale reflection of the sun, but it can simultaneously darken the World and make men blind.

Associated With: Artemis, Bastet, Horus, Kalfu, Tezcatlipoca, Thoth, Tsuki-yomi

LUNACY (MOON ••••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Presence

Cost: 1 Legend per Virtue Extremity and per person

The Scion captures the attention of a group of people and drives them temporarily mad. He must spend one Legend per person he wants to affect, up to a maximum number equal to his Legend. Affected victims suffer the Virtue Extremity from one of the Scion's chosen Virtues (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 118). If the Scion spends one additional Legend point per person, each person suffers an additional Virtue Extremity. That is, if he wants to affect five people with one Virtue Extremity, he must spend only five Legend points. If he wants them to suffer two Virtue Extremities, he must spend 10 Legend points. If he wants to affect all five people with the Virtue Extremity from all four of his Virtues, he must spend 20 Legend points. The Scion can choose how many of the present targets he wishes to affect, but he must affect them all with the same number of Virtue Extremities.

Multiple inflicted Virtue Extremities occur in sequence rather than simultaneously, counting down from the period of longest duration to shortest. If a victim has an equal or greater number of Legend dots than the Scion, her player may roll (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) against the Scion's activation roll. If the victim's roll wins, she may opt out of one of the Virtue Extremities imposed on her per Legend point she is willing to spend.

ECLIPSE HALO (MOON •••••)

Dice Pool: Appearance + Presence

Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion spends a Legend point and causes a thin, glowing corona of fire to appear in the air behind his head. This halo perfectly resembles the halo of sunfire that is visible around the edges of the moon during a

total solar eclipse. The halo remains perpendicular to all witnesses' lines of sight simultaneously.

While the halo remains, anyone who looks directly at the Scion—even through sunglasses or other polarized filters—is temporarily blinded. Being blinded thus inflicts a -4 penalty to a victim's dice pools and DVs for a number of successive actions equal to the Scion's Legend. The Scion can use this Boon only once per scene, but the halo remains visible for a number of ticks (or seconds) equal to the activation roll's successes.

PHASE BODY (MOON ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Stealth

Cost: 5 Legend

As with Phase Cloak (Moon •••), the Scion can turn his body away from everyone as the moon periodically turns its face away from the World. With this Boon, however, the Scion doesn't render himself harder to see, he becomes that much harder to hit. The parts of his body that Phase Cloak would make invisible become intangible instead.

A character can attempt to use this Boon only once per scene, and the effects last for the entire scene. The effects are as follows:

Phase	Difficulty	Effect
Gibbous	2	Subtract two successes from enemy attack rolls after Step Three of attack resolution
Half	4	Subtract four successes from enemy attack rolls after Step Three of attack resolution
Crescent	6	Subtract six successes from enemy attack rolls after Step Three of attack resolution
New	8	Subtract eight successes from enemy attack rolls after Step Three of attack resolution
Full	Botch	Character grows slightly rounder at the edges, suffering a -2 DV penalty.

A character can activate Phase Cloak and Phase Body during the same scene, but he must do so at the same time with the same activation roll. The combined effect costs six Legend points, and the difficulties for each effect's phase are added together. Achieving the gibbous phase of both effects simultaneously is a difficulty 3 roll, for instance. Achieving the new moon phase is a difficulty 12 roll.

MOON CHARIOT (MOON ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Strength + Control (to drive)

Cost: 1 Legend per 200 lbs.

The character says a quick prayer under the night sky, praising the moon God or Goddess who granted him access to this Purview. In response, a silver chariot descends, pulled by two black horses with manes, hooves and eyes of pure moonlight.

The chariot can carry and store comfortably up to 200 pounds of people or equipment per point of Legend the character spends (up to a maximum number equal to the Scion's Legend rating). It moves at a maximum 500 miles per hour. It can fly as high or low as the character commands, and it will wait patiently at any height for as long as the character commands it to. The chariot lasts until daybreak, after which it lands and immediately becomes intangible, returning to the Overworld whence it came.

Taking control of the chariot is not easy. Doing so requires a successful (Strength + Control) roll at difficulty 8. Failing this roll causes the horses to run wild at full speed, going wherever they please (up to the Storyteller) until the Scion can regain control. If the Scion's player should botch this roll, the chariot not only goes out of control but crashes somewhere far away before returning to the Overworld. If the Scion who summoned the chariot fears such an occurrence, he can have one of the other, stronger passengers take the reins and try to drive. Successfully taking control of the chariot once in a night is enough to make the horses respond to standard-difficulty (Strength + Control) rolls for the rest of the night.

This Moon Chariot can be summoned only at night, and only once per night by the same Scion.

PSYCHOPOMP

No place in the World is inaccessible to demigods who practice this Purview—themselves often called by the Purview's name. Psychopomps know the secret ways into the lands of the dead, and they can lead their fellow Scions into the mythic places that border the World. The only doors that remain locked to them are those that block the way into the Overworld itself. Only the Gods, the Titans and the mightiest of titanspawn can force those portals.

Associated With: Baron Samedi, Hermes, Izanagi, Legba, Odin, Ptah, Quetzalcoátl, Susano-o, Tsuki-yomi

COME ALONG (PSYCHOPOMP ••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend per person

Most Psychopomp Boons that allow for supernatural travel apply only to the Scion who uses them. With this supplemental Boon, however, the Scion can bring other people or ghosts whose presence she's aware of along with her when she uses those Boons as if those others both had and used the Boons in question themselves.

She need only spend one Legend per person she intends to bring along, and the person for whom she spends the point must follow the Scion willingly. While the effect lasts, each follower moves in whatever supernatural way the psychopomp does. Only the first two Boons of the Psychopomp Purview (Unerring Orientation and Where Are You?) and this one cannot be conferred on others with this Boon. The others are all fair game unless otherwise noted.

TERRA INCOGNITA (PSYCHOPOMP •••••)

Dice Pool: Perception + Awareness

Cost: None

With a traveler's sixth sense, the psychopomp can mystically feel her way to the nearest terra incognita, Touchstone or other strange place to her location. If she's standing in the ruins of the Minoan palace at Knossus, she can feel the way to the entrance to the True Labyrinth. If she's on an icebreaker headed toward Antarctica, she can feel the path to the gates of Atlantis. If her journey is carrying her toward the threshold of any of the many mythic realms connected to the World and the character puts her mind to finding that threshold, she can find it with this Boon. (Any mythic realm from Chapter Four is fair game, as are any such realms the Storyteller might create.)

When the character arrives, she gets a sense of what she has to do to enter (if some special requirement must be met). If she has to make a sacrifice to some hidden guardian, she understands that a sacrifice must be made. If she has to answer some riddle to gain admittance, she gets a sense to that effect. This Boon won't tell her the specifics required for entry—it won't give her the riddle's answer, for instance—but it will give her enough information to put her search on the right track.

In addition, this Boon will help a character find the center of a Touchstone when she's in its vicinity. It can also point the way to the entrance to any mythic realm she's already visited, regardless of where she is in relation to it. If she's never been to the mythic realm in question but she's actively searching for it, this Boon specifically directs her once he gets within one mile of the entrance per dot of Legend she has.

If the character is in the vicinity of and looking for some gateway to the Overworld or the Underworld, this Boon can also help in locating such a place. Unfortunately, every gateway to the Overworld is impermeably blocked off to mortals, to most titanspawn, and to Scions who are not themselves Gods. As for the Underworld, most such gateways are also blocked, though not by doors or barred gates. What blocks off those Passages is rubble thrown up as if by great explosions or tectonic upheavals. This debris was strewn about by the Titans' escape from their ancient prisons, and most of it is thick with confused titanspawn and lost ghosts who don't realize how much time has passed since they died. Yet not every Passage into the Underworld is blocked off, so if a Scion's Band dares the dangers that lie beyond the World, great adventures and unimaginable rewards await.

MARATHON SPRINTER (PSYCHOPOMP • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend + 1 Willpower

The Psychopomp's Dash rate increases dramatically when the character does nothing but run. The player spends a point of Legend and Willpower, and the character starts running. For as long as she keeps going, her Dash increases by a factor of five after any bonuses or additions from Epic Dexterity or the like. The character can run across calm water like a skipping stone or traverse loose snow or deep mud without sinking into it. When she gets to where she's going, the character can simply stop on a dime, defying inertia.

Running through unfamiliar territory at such an insane speed can be... *tricky* to say the least. Navigating between such obstacles as trees or buildings or crowds of people requires a successful (Wits + Athletics) roll with a difficulty equal to the character's (Epic Dexterity + 1). Failure on the roll doesn't send the character crashing into anything, it just means she's stymied by obstacles and has to stop running. (It's up to the Storyteller where this occurs.) If this roll should botch, however, the character can't quite stop in time. She crashes into some obstacle hard enough to inflict one automatic level of bashing damage per dot of Legend she has. (The same goes for anyone following the Scion via Come Along.)

If the player wants, the character can use this Boon to zip around in one location at high speed. That's fine, but the character can do nothing else but dash while this Boon is active. If she wants to take any other action, she has to stop running first.

RAINBOW BRIDGE (PSYCHOPOMP • • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Awareness

Cost: 1 Legend per 200 miles

The psychopomp can magically teleport almost anywhere from wherever she is. The only limitation is that this Boon does not allow travel across the borders that separate otherworldly realms from each other or from the World. She can cover an amount of distance equal to 200 miles per point of Legend she spends upon activating the Boon. When she activates the Boon, a multicolored aurora similar to the Northern Lights twists outward and around her before it and she both disappear with a faint pop. Five seconds later, the same thing happens in reverse in the place the character wants to go (be it inside or outside).

The character need only be able to see her destination from her current position or work out the general area's latitude and longitude, which is much easier the more detailed a map she has. (The more detailed the map is, the more bonus dice it can offer to the activation roll, at the Storyteller's discretion.) Fate makes sure the traveler doesn't drop down into some immediately harmful circumstance, such as a pool of lava or sticking halfway through a wall, but not landing in immediate danger does not mean the character automatically lands in a safe place.

(It is from the effect's rainbow aurora that the Boon takes its name. Bifröst, the actual bridge that leads to Asgard, is still blocked to demigod, hero and mortal traffic.)

SKY

Proud and powerful are those demigods who can juggle lightning while being borne aloft by black clouds and skirling winds. All the blue sky is their canvas and their playground.

Associated With: Frigg, Horus, Izanagi, Quetzalcoátl, Raiden, Set, Shango, Susano-o, Thor, Tlaloc, Zeus

WIND GRAPPLE (SKY • • • •)

Dice Pool: Wits + Brawl

Cost: 1 Legend per action

By directing freak gusts of wind and the airborne detritus that collects in them, the Scion can wrestle with opponents without even touching them. Doing so requires one Legend point per action, and the Scion's player rolls (Wits + Brawl) to direct the winds. This roll functions just as the normal roll for a clinch attack, contested against the defender's efforts as normal. If his attack succeeds, the Scion may do with his victim as any successful grappler can do with a subdued victim, from pinning him to crushing him to throwing him. The attacker cannot apply any bonus dice or Knacks from his Epic Strength in these grappling maneuvers.

If the victim turns the tables on his attacker (by achieving more successes on the contested roll), he frees himself but does not gain control of the grapple. Also, if the attacker does nothing else in his action, he may simultaneously grapple a number of opponents in this way equal to his Legend. His player makes only one attack roll, against which all opponents must contend.

CLOUD SCULPTOR (SKY • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Art

Cost: 1 Legend

The Scion with this Boon is an artist with all of the sky as his canvas. If he can see clouds in the sky from his current vantage, he can shape and sculpt them with the motions of his hands. Many such artists prefer to sculpt clouds while looking through a window, as the glass pane gives them something solid to bear down on and trace out their sky designs. The Scion can't add or erase clouds, but he can stretch thick clouds thin or compress many wispy clouds into one large, billowy mass. Also, if a stiff wind picks up at a high altitude, the artist can make a circle with his fingers and block off that section of the sky to keep his masterpiece from being torn apart. He can't keep out anything but wind, however.

If two Scions are dabbling in the same part of the sky, their efforts call for contested (Dexterity + Art) rolls.

LEVIN FURY (SKY • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Wits + Marksmanship
Cost: 3 Legend per attack

This Boon calls upon the power of lightning, either from the sky or from the Scion himself. To use it, the Scion raises a hand heavenward or points his Birthright weapon at his intended foe. At his behest, lightning either lances down from the sky or launches from the weapon itself to smite the victim. Each such bolt inflicts 15 dice of lethal damage plus extra successes on the Marksmanship roll. An attack that inflicts damage also inflicts knockdown or knockback automatically.

The Scion can even strike multiple targets with bolts of lightning if he's willing to pay three Legend per each targeted victim. Each victim so targeted must be within the Scion's line of sight, and the Scion's player makes a single (Wits + Marksmanship) roll against which all victims must contest. The Scion can simultaneously create and aim a number of bolts equal to his Legend—and he can target as many (or as few) targets as he pleases.

If the Scion targets another Scion who also has this Boon, the target can attempt to use this Boon to parry the lightning bolt(s). Doing so requires spending three points of Legend, as if the target had activated the Boon herself. If her Parry DV negates all of the original attack roll's successes (per a regular parry attempt), the bolt effectively becomes hers to control. On her next action, she can either allow it to dissipate harmlessly, or she can redirect it with a (Wits + Marksmanship) roll of her own. She need not spend *another* three points of Legend to attack with it, as she already spent the requisite three points. If she splits the bolt apart to attack multiple characters, however, she must pay the additional Legend points required for each additional character.

TORNADO TAMER (SKY • • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Wits + Control
Cost: 4 Legend per dot of Epic Strength (max • • • •)

The Scion has a pet tornado. He captures it and puts it away when he doesn't need it; he lets it out when he does need it. When he sets it loose, it swirls and howls in front of him, ready to obey his every command—yet eager to run wild if he should lose control.

The tornado is one yard in radius at the top per dot of Legend the character has, and it's very strong. It has up to four dots of Epic Strength, for each of which the character must feed the tornado four points of Legend when he sets it loose. It applies this Epic Strength to determine how much of the scenery it can lift around itself and how far it can throw what it picks up. The dots also fill a dice pool that allows the tornado to grab up a victim and potentially batter him silly at the Scion's command.

Directing the tornado requires a (Wits + Control) roll for every action. If the player fails, the tornado spins in place, juggling the loose objects it has picked up thus far. If the player botches, the tornado runs giddily out of control, doing as it wills until the player rolls a successful Control roll again to re-tame and capture the rogue twister.

If the Scion wills, the tornado can lift him (but no one else) and carry him around. The tornado can move up to 100 miles per hour, and few obstacles can stand

in its way for long. Its swirling winds and loose debris even offer an Armor value (including bashing, lethal and aggravated damage, as well as all-purpose Hardness) equal to the Scion's Legend. He can't make attacks from within the howling vortex, but that's okay. The tornado can make attacks for him.

The tornado lasts for one scene before it gets tired and the Scion has to put it away again.

SUN

Demigod Scions who practice this Purview all strive to become every bit as perfect and radiant and beautiful as the celestial body whence their power derives.

Associated With: Amaterasu, Apollo, Atum-Re, Baldur, Bastet, Freyr, Heimdall, Horus, Huitzilopochtli, Legba, Tezcatlipoca

FLARE MISSILE (SUN ••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend per missile

At high noon or darkest midnight, the Scion can fire projectiles of solid sunlight at her enemies. As long as she has a weapon such as a bow, a firearm, a sling or even an atlatl, her player can spend a point of Legend to create glowing ammunition for it out of pure sunlight. Using this Boon adds a number of levels of damage equal to the character's Legend to the damage roll's results before soak. Attacks made using this Boon always inflict lethal damage—unless the target has a special susceptibility to sunlight—and always have the Piercing quality (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 203).

BURN (SUN •••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Willpower + 1 Legend

The Scion's skin changes from its normal hue to a deeper brown to an angry red and becomes hot to the touch. This heat can't ignite inflammable objects, but it's enough to burn others' unprotected flesh. Anyone who touches the Scion's body with exposed flesh or with skin covered only by a layer or two of clothing suffers a number of dice of lethal damage equal to the Scion's Legend. (This damage comes in addition to any damage the Scion might inflict in a clinch or other unarmed attack.)

The character's skin radiates this heat for one scene. Victims' skin damaged by this heat reddens and blisters as if from a painful sunburn. The heat from the Scion's body is not that of a fire, so Fire Immunity (Fire •) does not automatically protect against it.

SOLAR PROMINENCE (SUN ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Appearance + Presence

Cost: 3 Legend

The Scion concentrates for one action (Speed 5) as pairs of black sunspots swirl across her body. When the effect occurs, a broad band of sunfire arcs off her and dissipates slowly in the air. This arc, this solar prominence in miniature, disrupts all television, radio, cell phone, wi-fi, walkie-talkie, CB and satellite signals in the air around her for a number of yards equal to the player's successes on the roll. This disruption lasts for five seconds per dot of Legend the character has, and the area of effect moves with her.

SUN CHARIOT (SUN ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Strength + Control (to drive)

Cost: 1 Legend per 200 lbs.

This Boon is almost exactly the same as Moon Chariot (Moon ••••• ••) on p. 84. The only differences are that the chariot can be summoned only during the day, the chariot itself is made of gold, and the horses are bright white with manes, hooves and eyes of sunlight. The chariot lasts until sundown, after which it lands and immediately becomes intangible, returning to the Overworld whence it came.

WAR

When the time comes for all Scions to join their divine parents on the battlefields of the Overworld, it is the Scions who best understand this Purview who will lead the way.

Associated With: Ares, Athena, Erzulie, Freya, Freyr, Hachiman, Huitzilopochtli, Odin, Ogoun, Set, Tezcatlipoca, Tyr

BATTLE MAP (WAR ••••)

Dice Pool: Perception + Survival

Cost: 1 Legend

This Boon creates for the Scion a virtual, three-dimensional contour map of a battlefield, complete with terrain features and troop movements. This map can take up an area no larger than four square yards, and it can show only an area that the Scion has scouted personally or has had scouted within 24 hours.

The map shows an overhead view of the area with a resolution equal to the Scion's own visual acuity. It symbolically indicates the Scion's troops and equipment, the enemy's troops and equipment, and any uninvolved civilians (based on the Scion's own distinction) in different colors. As those forces move through the area the map represents, the symbols move accordingly. The projection lasts for one scene.

MORALE FAILURE (WAR •••••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Presence

Cost: 1 Legend per 5 troops

The Scion can shake an enemy's leadership and seed an outbreak of cowardice among the men. When he makes himself visible to an opposing force's leader, his player rolls (Manipulation + Presence) against the enemy leader's player's roll of (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). If the Scion's player wins, he may spend one Legend point per every five of the enemy's troops he wishes to affect. Troops affected thus through their leader will not, under any circumstances, attack any force led by

the Scion who used this Boon. This reluctance lasts for one week per dot of Legend the Scion has.

An opposing Scion can use Blessing of Bravery (War •) to cancel this effect, but only if he has more dots of Legend and gets more successes on the activation roll. A Scion can use Morale Failure to override an extant Blessing of Bravery effect (regardless of relative Legend ratings) if his player's activation roll gets more successes than the lower-rated Boon's roll did.

ARMY OF ONE (WAR ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Command
Cost: 2 Legend per duplicate

The Scion can multiply himself into a tightly coordinated unit of duplicate versions of himself. He gets one duplicate per two Legend points he spends, up to a maximum number of duplicates equal to his Legend rating. Each duplicate is the Scion himself, with all the same Attributes, Abilities and Epic Attributes. The Scion can use no Boons or Knacks while he's divided thus, but any extant effects for Boons or Knacks he used before then remain active for each duplicate. Also, he has only one Legend pool to share among the duplicates. Followers and Creature Birthrights do not multiply among the duplicates, but each duplicate has the character's relics. Yet at the end of the effect, only one Scion and one complete set of relics remains.

For the most part, each duplicate the Scion controls must perform roughly the same action—all of them acting based on the Scion's player's Join Battle roll. They arrange themselves minimally so as not to get in each other's way, such as encircling an opponent in order to attack simultaneously, but they must either perform the same action, using the same dice pool, as their counterparts or take cover, performing no action. (They can perform the same action against different targets, though.) The Scion can make one group of duplicates perform a different action from what the rest are doing. He must split his action as per a standard multiple action, though, with the concomitant dice pool penalties. When the duplicates are performing the same action in combat against the same target, they are automatically assumed to be performing a coordinated assault (see **Scion: Hero,** p. 190).

The effect lasts for one scene. At the end of that scene, the Scion (also, the player) decides which of the surviving duplicates is the original. The rest dissolve into nothingness, along with any blood they spilled or relics they dropped.

COLOSSUS ARMOR (WAR ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: None
Cost: 1 Willpower + 10 Legend

The Scion leaps into the air as liquid bands of brass and steel materialize in the air around him. These bands enwrap the Scion's body and take the shape of a 15-foot-tall warrior of a classical culture associated with the Scion's divine parent—an enormous metal samurai, for instance. This giant warrior is unarmed by default, but the Scion can equip it with an appropriately sized version of some melee weapon in the character's possession for another two points of Legend. (The choice doesn't change the damage he can inflict, but it allows him to use Melee instead of Brawl in combat.)

While he's wearing the Colossus Armor, the Scion adds 15 dots to his Strength before taking his Epic Strength into account. The armor also has an all-purpose soak of 20 and a Hardness of 10. If damage inflicted by enemies' attacks surmounts that Hardness and soak, whatever's left over is then compared to the character's soak (and any independent Hardness rating he might have). The colossus moves with the character's own Dexterity and Abilities, but it weighs 1,000 pounds. Its attacks can inflict either bashing or lethal damage as the character wishes.

The character can wear his Colossus Armor for one scene, after which its metal body evaporates, lowering the character to the ground once again.

WATER

Humanity views the World's vast oceans, swift rivers and fathomless lakes with as much wonder as fear; as much respect as distrust. So too do other Scions view the rare demigods who wield this Purview's power.

Associated With: Poseidon, Quetzalcoátl, Sobek, Susano-o

CREATE WATER (WATER ••••)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Craft

Cost: 2 Legend per quantity

The Scion extends her hands and water pours forth from her open palms. For every two Legend points spent, she can create a quantity of gallons equal to the successes on the activation roll. This water can be either salt or fresh water, though one activation roll can create only one or the other. The water comes from the Scion's hands at room temperature, about as fast as it comes out of a normal faucet on full blast—at a rate of roughly two gallons per minute.

DESICCATE (WATER •••••)

Dice Pool: Strength + Medicine

Cost: 1 Legend + 1 Willpower

When she touches an opponent's bare skin, the Scion can suck the water right out of that opponent's body. This attack inflicts an amount of lethal damage equal to successes on the activation roll, minus the opponent's lethal soak.

WATER MASTERY (WATER ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Craft

Cost: 5 Legend

Similar to Water Control (Water ••), the Scion can mentally manipulate liquid water however she desires. Her command of it is now such, however, that she can exert her full Strength and even Epic Strength through the water on some object, just as if she were affecting that object with her physical body. She can also stiffen water's surface such that not only she, but other people who fit onto the affected area can all walk on it. Finally, she can manipulate more of it than she could with Water Control—up to 10 cubic yards of water (roughly 2,000 gallons) per dot of Legend she has.

WATER VORTEX (WATER ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Wits + Control

Cost: 4 Legend per dot of Epic Strength (max ••••)

This Boon works just as Tornado Tamer (Sky ••••• ••) does, with a few key exceptions. First, the vortex must be generated from a sufficient quantity of liquid water. Second, the spinning funnel can be either a standing waterspout or a sunken whirlpool—and it can change at the Scion's discretion.

Either type of funnel can move freely in or on open water. A waterspout can leap out of the water and move around on land like an air-born tornado, but only for a number of actions equal to the Scion's Legend. If it's not back over water in that time, it unravels, throwing water in every direction as the effect comes to an end.

PANTHEON-SPECIFIC PURVIEWS

Using these Boons never requires Birthright relics, but no Scion can purchase or use those pantheon-specific Purviews that come from pantheons to which his divine parent does not belong. Scions must buy each Boon in sequence, but they don't have to buy them separately. The Scion's player pays the experience for the next dot in the progression to receive the next individual power or increase in power.

ARETE

The Arete Purview of the Greek Gods adds bonus dice to a given roll, based on given Abilities rather than Attributes. Cashing in two bonus dice from an Arete also allows for a potential reroll if the roll should somehow fail. At the demigod level, the only thing that changes is the number of bonus dice available and the number of rerolls for which those bonus dice can be cashed in. The available benefits are as follows:

Arete Dots	Bonus Dice	Potential Rerolls
• • • •	7	3
• • • • •	11	5
• • • • • •	16	8
• • • • • ••	22	11

Bear in mind that the listed numbers of bonus dice represent the *total* bonus dice available. If the character has five dots of Arete in an Ability and his player buys a sixth dot, he gains five more bonus dice, not 16 more.

For the original write-up of the Arete Purview, see page 149 of **Scion: Hero**.

CHEVAL

A demigod of the Loa uses these Boons to assume the role of "*met tet*" or head spirit in a person's life. She can use such powers to guide and instruct those under her care, or she can abuse them as she sees fit.

MIND-RIDING (CHEVAL • • • •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend

While the Scion is using Rada's Eyes (Cheval •) to experience someone else's senses, she can't normally pick up on that person's reactions to the things he's sensing. With Mind-Riding, however, the Scion can listen in on the thoughts of the person whose senses she's riding. These thoughts whisper in the rider's mind, and the mental images they conjure play behind the rider's eyes. Yet, while the rider has access to her victim's conscious thoughts, she garners only what context those thoughts provide. She can't snoop around in the victim's memory to make sense of an enigmatic reaction.

While using Rada's Eyes, the Scion need only spend an additional point of Legend in order to listen in on the host's thoughts.

WAKING ZOMBIE (CHEVAL • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Cheval

Cost: 1 Willpower

When the Scion has a mortal victim completely under her control, she can temporarily pull the victim's spirit out of his body and boss the body around as her mindless slave. The Scion must somehow incapacitate the victim—by tying him up, drugging him, beating him unconscious or whatever—then cover the victim's mouth with her own and take a long, deep breath. The victim's player then rolls (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) against the activation roll. If the activation roll wins, the Scion sucks out the victim's spirit and swallows it down into the darkness within her. Once that happens, the victim maintains a dreamlike semi-awareness of what the Scion is doing, just as a victim of Horse (Cheval • • •) does, but he can't take any actions or exert his own will in any way.

When the spirit is out, the body wakes back up, and the Scion may talk to it in its own voice and give it commands that it must follow. The empty body tries its hardest to do anything the Scion tells it to do, using all of its original Attributes except Charisma, Manipulation, Intelligence or Wits. The body can't speak, and all of its Abilities but its Athletics, Brawl and Fortitude are off limits.

The spirit remains trapped within the Scion for a number of hours equal to the threshold successes on the activation roll. While the body is empty of spirit, Scions of higher Legend than the one who used Waking Zombie on it can attempt to take control of it with other Cheval Boons. To do so, though, they must vie against the Scion's player's resistance rolls, rather than those of the victim himself.

MET TET (CHEVAL • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Control

Cost: 1 Willpower + 3 Legend

This Boon is very similar to Horse (Cheval • • •), in that it lets a Scion take total control of a mortal victim's body for a limited time, manipulating it as if it were her own. As with Horse, the Scion must be using Rada's Eyes (Cheval •) on the victim first in order to use this Boon. Having done so, the Scion's player makes the activation roll for this Boon (contested as per Horse) and spends the requisite Willpower and Legend. If this roll succeeds, the Scion's body becomes entirely incorporeal and steps into the body of her victim like a ghost taking possession of it. Having done so, the Scion can either assert control as per Horse or simply continue to ride around within the unaware victim sharing his sensations. Either way, she can remain inside the victim's body for a number of

days equal to her Legend. When that time is up, or if the Scion ends the effect early, she rides the victim's breath back out of his body and materializes before him.

Damage inflicted on the victim while the Scion is riding inside does not harm the Scion, but it can force her out prematurely. If the victim suffers a single level of aggravated damage or more levels of lethal damage from one attack than the Scion has dots of Stamina, the Scion is forcibly expelled from the victim's body.

Team (Cheval ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Control

Cost: 1 Willpower + 5 Legend

The Scion can now use Horse (Cheval •••) on multiple mortal victims simultaneously. The Scion need not be using Rada's Eyes (Cheval •) first in order to use this Boon, but all of the victims must be in the Scion's line of sight when she activates it. The player makes one activation roll and compares the results to the (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) rolls of all the victims. Any victim her roll beats becomes a spirit horse for her, up to a maximum number equal to her Legend. She can maintain this multiple possession for one scene, and her real body slumps insensate as per Horse.

For the most part, each body the Scion controls must perform roughly the same action—all of them acting based on the Scion's player's Join Battle roll. They must also be within line of sight of at least one other of their number. They arrange themselves minimally so as not to get in each other's way, such as lining up single file to walk through a tight space, but they must either perform the same action, using the same dice pool, as their counterparts or perform no action. (They can perform the same action against different targets, though.) The Scion can make one team of horses perform a different action from what the rest are doing. She must split her action as per a standard multiple action, though, with the concomitant dice pool penalties. When the horses are performing the same action in combat against the same target, they are automatically assumed to be performing a coordinated assault (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 190).

When the Scion speaks through her various horses, different parts of what she's saying come randomly from the different bodies' mouths. Damage inflicted on the bodies in combat has no effect on the Scion until only one horse remains. At that point, damage is applied to the Scion as per Horse.

Heku

According to ancient Egyptian belief, the human soul consists of the *ren* (name), *sekem* (energy), *ba* (soul/personality), *ka* (corporeal life-force), *akh* (postmortem union of *ba* and *ka*), *khaibit* (shadow) and *sekhu* (the body's physical remains). The more a demigod understands this Purview, the more profoundly he can affect his chosen target.

Influence Ba (Heku ••••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Presence

Cost: 1 Willpower

By capturing a person's undivided attention and staring in her eyes, the Scion can overwrite a portion of her personality. To do so, the player pits his activation roll against the victim's player's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll. If the victim is a mortal, the Scion chooses one of his own Virtues and imposes on that person an equal rating in the same Virtue. (See the "Imposed Virtues" sidebar on p. 97.) The Virtue lasts for a number of days equal to the unanswered successes on the Scion's activation roll.

If the victim is a Scion, the Boon has a limited effect. Instead of imposing a Virtue on his victim, the user instead inflicts the Virtue Extremity of one of his own Virtues on the victim. This condition lasts for a number of hours equal to the Boon user's threshold successes on the activation roll.

In either case, the Scion who uses this Boon must be able to capture his victim's attention and stare into her eyes for a number of minutes equal to his rating in the Virtue he's chosen to impose. This Boon does not affect titanspawn or non-sentient beings such as animals or constructs.

Heart Scarab (Heku •••••)

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Craft

Cost: 1 Legend

In a workshop in his spare time, the Scion crafts small scarabs out of imperishable materials such as steel, desert glass, precious metals, gems or what have you. Creating a scarab that will suffice for the purposes of this Boon requires a successful (Dexterity + Craft) roll of difficulty 5. Having done so, he may then place the scarab on the chest of a dead body and spend a point of Legend. When he does so, the scarab sinks into the corpse's flesh and wraps its legs around the breastbone. From that point on, the corpse will be perfectly preserved in its current condition, free from the ravages of time and decay. Activating a heart scarab also sends the corpse's ghost directly back to the underworld whence it came, whether that ghost is lingering elsewhere in the World or is stuck in the body (per the description of a hungry corpse in **Scion: Hero** on p. 294). The ghost can return to the World thereafter, if it has the means.

If a necromancer should raise a body that has a heart scarab attached to it as an undead servitor (such as a zombie or a mummy), the heart scarab doubles the body's Stamina for the purposes of determining soak. The scarab itself has a soak of 5L/5B and Hardness 5, as well as five health levels. The object must be completely destroyed in order to render it ineffective, and targeting it imposes a -5 penalty to the attack roll. Simply tearing

a heart scarab loose requires a contested Strength roll against the scarab's effective Strength 5.

KHAIBIT TRAP (HEKU • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult

Cost: 1 Willpower to create, 1 Legend to activate

The Scion strikes a wall, floor, ceiling or sturdy object with his palm and speaks the name of his divine parent. When he does so, a cartouche seal bearing the hieroglyphic characters that represent his divine parent appears on the surface. This seal has an area in square inches equal to the successes acquired on the activation roll. (You can assume the seal is a rectangle to make determining its size easier.) Unless the surface that the seal covers is physically broken, the seal remains in place for a number of months equal to the Scion's Legend. After that, it fades out as if it were never there.

While the seal is within his line of sight, the Scion who created it may spend a point of Legend to activate it, after which it remains active for a number of hours equal to his Legend. During that period, the shadow of any sentient being that overlaps the area of the seal becomes trapped within the seal. When the sentient being to whom the shadow belongs reaches her shadow's limit—based on the relative position of the ambient light sources—she can't move any farther. It's as if her shadow were a cape and the seal is a hook on which that cape is snagged.

An activated seal can trap as many sentient beings as are careless enough to let their shadows cross it. When a victim's shadow has been trapped, she can see the outline of the seal glowing faintly gold, though no one who isn't trapped can see the glow. If a trapped victim wants to be free, there are four ways to become so. First, she can simply wait around for the duration of the activation to wear off. Second, the Scion who laid the trap can deactivate it. Third, the victim can try to damage the seal's surface to disrupt the trap. Fourth, she can just haul herself away from the seal hard enough to literally tear her shadow loose of it.

The latter two options both present problems, however. To damage the seal and disrupt the trap, the character must inflict a number of levels of damage on the surface equal to the Legend of the Scion who laid the trap or enough to simply destroy the surface (whichever is lower). Unfortunately, damage inflicted on the seal is likewise inflicted as an equal number of levels of unsoakable bashing damage on everyone trapped by that seal. Simply tearing oneself free is potentially even more dangerous. Doing so requires a (Strength + Athletics) roll that yields as many successes as the Scion who laid the trap achieved on the roll to create it. If she is strong enough to get free, the character literally tears a section of her shadow off, which makes an awful sound in her head that she'll remember until her dying day. She is dazed and Inactive for a number of ticks equal to the Legend of the Scion who set the trap, and worse yet, the torn-off part of her shadow remains stuck in the trap. That alone causes the Scion no especial distress, but if damage should befall the surface the seal covers, that damage is still transmitted to the Scion as unsoakable bashing damage.

(Using Shadow Craft [see p. 72], a Scion can cut a trapped section of his shadow off and free himself, but doing so affects him the same way physically tearing himself loose would.)

AWAKENING THE AKH (HEKU • • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Occult

Cost: 5 Legend + 1 Willpower

Normally, a person's ba and ka remain separate until that person's death. When he dies, his ba and ka unite into a luminous hybrid being of pure energy called the akh. A Scion with this Boon, however, can blend his ba and ka at will, awakening his akh and separating it from his physical body while he yet lives.

When he does so, a ghostly golden form rises from within him while his body slumps insensate to the ground. The shining form looks like the character minus his clothing or equipment, except that lambent energy dances across his skin and iridescent wings like those of a beetle flicker around his shoulders and behind his back. These wings enable him to fly at his normal Move rate. In this form, the character is intangible but remains visible to physical creatures. He remains visible to ghosts and spirits as well, but he can now see them and interact with them physically.

He can use none of his Physical Epic Attributes in this form, nor can he use any Boons except those of the Heku Purview. Also, supernatural powers that are designed to affect ghosts affect the character in this form—though he's much better equipped to defend himself than the average ghost is.

When the character raises his beetle wings upon activating the Boon, tiny golden scarabs made of glimmering energy emerge from the hollows beneath and hover around the character. One scarab emerges per dot of Legend the character has, and each one carries a pulsing sphere of golden energy. At the character's command, one scarab per action can discharge its energy sphere as a blazing beam at a target in the character's line of sight. Firing thus does not count as the character's action. The character aims this beam mentally, calling for a reflexive (Perception + Marksmanship) roll. The beam inflicts 15 dice of lethal damage, plus extra successes on the Marksmanship roll. A successful hit ignores armor, but not soak. Each scarab can fire only once before it disintegrates in a puff of evanescent specks.

The character remains in his akh form for a number of minutes equal to the successes the player rolled to activate the Boon. When that time is up, any remaining golden scarabs vanish, and the akh instantaneously returns to the character's body. If some supernatural

means—such as a ward—prevents the akh from reaching its body once the duration has expired, the akh sinks to the ground insensate, and the body suffers one level of lethal damage per interval of minutes equal to the character's Legend. (For example, if he has Legend 9, he suffers one level of lethal damage for every nine minutes his body lacks his errant akh.) If the obstruction is removed, the akh snaps back to the body. If no one removes the obstruction, the akh regains "consciousness" as a powerless ghost once its body has died.

ITZTLI

As a demigod of the Aztec pantheon grows ever more divine, she grows ever more to appreciate acts of sacrifice. She also comes to realize just how much the Gods rely on such acts in their war with the Titans. Therefore, she becomes capable of (and responsible for) much larger sacrifices in her own and her divine family's names.

OBSIDIAN EXCRUCIATION (ITZTLI • • • •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 lethal health level per Legend point

Having proved her devotion to the Atzlánti, the Scion no longer need give *of herself* in sacrifice. As such, the Scion may use Obsidian Mutilation (Itztli • • •) on a mortal, titanspawn or fellow Scion instead to reap the Legend reward. To do so, she ritually sheds a measure of the victim's blood sufficient to cause levels of lethal damage and then burns that blood as an offering. Doing so gains the Scion a point of Legend per level of lethal damage she inflicted. (These points may exceed the normal maximum, but any extra points disappear after one week.) The victim must either give his blood willingly or be under the Scion's control somehow—be it mind control, drugs or just being strapped down, squirming, on a frigid autopsy table. The blood that is burned must be fresh, which means that the Scion must ritually burn it in the action immediately after she gathers it from the victim's body. The Scion may make this sacrifice only once per week from the same victim.

If the Scion's ministrations kill her victim, or if she kills the victim in combat, she may also remove and burn the victim's heart as an offering to the Atzlánti. She must do so within one hour of when the victim died, and she must burn the whole heart. When she does so, she receives five Legend points and one Willpower point.

SACRIFICE OF WILL (ITZTLI • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Conviction

Cost: 1 Willpower

When the Scion contemplates a goal that is important not only to her, but to the Atzlánti—such as defending a temple from the titanspawn or thwarting a competing Scion from a different pantheon—she may give herself over to the Gods temporarily in pursuit of that goal. To do so, her player rolls the Scion's Conviction and spends one Willpower. If the roll succeeds, the player gains a number of bonus dice equal to the Scion's (Conviction + Legend) to add to rolls that directly pertain to the pursuit of her goal. She may also add bonus dice equal to her Conviction to resist persuasion that would sway her from her goal without spending any Willpower points, and regardless of how many times she's already done so in the same story. Those two benefits last for the rest of the scene. Also, any time she successfully inflicts damage with an attack in combat during the scene, she receives a point of Legend.

The downside of using this Boon is that as soon as the benefits kick in, the character immediately suffers the Fanatic Zeal Virtue Extremity, and it lasts for the rest of the scene—until the Scion either achieves her goal or irrevocably fails to do so. What's more, if the Scion does fail to accomplish her goal by scene's end, she loses all of his leftover Willpower points.

POCO A POCO (ITZTLI • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 aggravated health level per 5 (or 6) Legend

The Scion performs a substantial sacrifice and receives a greater reward of Legend points for it. To do so, she removes an irreplaceable part of a victim's body and burns it in a ritual dedicated to her divine parent or the Atzlánti in general. Each part she removes inflicts one level of aggravated damage and earns for the Scion five Legend points. As a general guideline, each hand and foot is worth one aggravated health level. Each arm from shoulder to wrist and each leg from hip to ankle is worth another aggravated health level. Each eye is worth an aggravated health level, as is the tongue. The male genitalia are worth an aggravated health level, as is the removal of a female's ovaries and uterus (in toto, not individually). The pitiful body that's left over after all those parts are removed is no longer suitable for sacrifices in the name of this Boon. It can still be killed and sacrificed in the name of Obsidian Excruciation, though.

The Scion may take the body part that is to be sacrificed from a mortal, titanspawn or Scion victim, or she may remove the part from her own body. (Sacrificing from one's own body nets six Legend points per aggravated health level. It also becomes increasingly difficult the more you do it.) The catch is that the Scion must remove and burn the body part herself, and the subject from whom she removes it must be alive at the time. The Scion can remove and store the body parts she wishes to sacrifice, but if the victim should die before she manages to go through with the act, burning the body parts does nothing for her beyond making room in the freezer.

THE BURNING HEART (ITZTLI • • • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: One heart

In an awful, gruesome display of power, the Scion tears the still-beating heart from a living victim and stuffs it into her own mouth. When she swallows the throbbing morsel down, she then slices open the skin of her chest and tears it back to reveal her blood-spattered ribcage. Only her heart is visible within, and it bursts into hellish red flames that cannot be doused. These flames also glow in the Scion's eyes and from within her mouth. For the rest of the scene, the Scion's effective Legend rating rises as follows, based on the victim's Legend's relation to the Scion's:

Victim	Legend Boost
No Legend rating	+1
Equal or lesser Legend	+2
Greater Legend	+3

This increase pertains to any Boons or Knacks whose effects are determined by the Scion's Legend. The maximum amount of Legend points the Scion can have increases as well, and this enlarged Legend pool is filled upon ingestion of the victim's heart. Under this effect, the Scion cannot fail Conviction or Courage rolls, nor can she even attempt to suppress her Conviction or Courage. Finally, the Scion's player adds a number of bonus dice equal to the character's (unmodified Legend + Itztli) to any Presence rolls made to intimidate others.

When the scene ends, the character's torn-open chest seals over once again as the fire burning within goes out. She huffs out a cloud of foul-smelling black smoke and returns to normal at last.

JOTUNBLUT

A legacy of giants' blood runs in the veins of all the Norse Gods and their offspring. By shedding some of that blood, a Scion of that pantheon can empower an animal or a mortal human (known as a berserk) and ensure that recipient's loyalty. Demigod Scions can do so to a much greater extent than heroic Scions can, but when they do, they risk forever damaging the minds of anyone to whom they expose this blood.

(For the basic rules on how the Jotunblut Purview works, see p. 152 of **Scion: Hero**. All of those rules still apply to the following Boons, and additional factors come into play as well. Other effects of being dosed with Jotunblut and becoming a berserk appear on p. 285 of **Scion: Hero**.)

SUPERNAL BESTIAL ENDOWMENT (JOTUNBLUT • • • •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 lethal health level + 4 Legend

The Scion grants a beast four extra dots to be divided as he sees fit between its Strength and Stamina. The beast also gains two extra -0 health levels. The beast remains loyal to only the Scion, who can still train him as normal, but that loyalty must be renewed once every three months (roughly one season).

SUPERNAL HUMAN ENDOWMENT (JOTUNBLUT • • • • •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 lethal health level + 5 Legend

The Scion can now imbue a human with four free Attribute dots to be spent into the human's Strength and/or Stamina. The recipient also gains two extra -0 health levels. The person remains loyal to the Scion for three months (roughly one season). This devotion is such that the person's imposed Loyalty Virtue rises to 5. (See the "Imposed Virtues" sidebar on p. 97.) A Scion cannot use this Boon on a beast. If the listed time elapses before which a Scion must restore his Jotunblut bond with a mortal, the mortal loses any imposed Loyalty dots.

EPIC ENDOWMENT (JOTUNBLUT • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 lethal health level + 6 Legend

The Scion can imbue a human with five free Attribute dots to be spent into the human's Strength and/or Stamina. The recipient also gains four extra -0 health levels. The person remains loyal to the Scion for six months with an imposed Loyalty of 5. It also raises the berserk's imposed Courage to 5. (See the "Imposed Virtues" sidebar.) A Scion cannot use this Boon on a beast. If the listed time elapses before which a Scion must restore his Jotunblut bond with a mortal, the mortal loses any imposed Loyalty and responds to any physical threat thereafter in a Berserker Fury (per the Courage Virtue Extremity).

DIVINE ENDOWMENT (JOTUNBLUT • • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 lethal health level + 7 Legend

The Scion can now imbue a human with either six free Attribute dots to be spent into the human's Strength and/or Stamina or one dot to be spent into Epic Strength or Epic Stamina. Doing the latter also grants the human either the Crushing Grip or Holy Fortitude Knack (respectively). The recipient also gains six extra -0 health levels. As with Epic Endowment, the berserk's imposed Loyalty and Courage are both 5. (See the "Imposed Virtues" sidebar.) A Scion cannot use this Boon on a beast. If the listed time elapses before which a Scion must restore his Jotunblut bond with a mortal,

the mortal loses any imposed Loyalty and responds to any physical threat thereafter in a Berserker Fury (per the Courage Virtue Extremity).

Tsukumo-Gami

Every physical object has a spirit, known as a kami. Scions of the Amatsukami—which are but very powerful and influential spirits themselves—understand that fact and use this Purview to communicate with and cajole those spirits. Whether the spirits treat her with terrified deference or honored respect, however, depends entirely on how the Scion uses and has used her power.

The Summoned Spirit (Tsukumo-Gami • • • •)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Occult

Cost: 1 Legend

By constructing a temporary shrine devoted to a kami whose name she knows—and whose Legend is less than her own—the Scion can call upon that kami wherever she is. The spirit's face materializes in the shrine, and the Scion may attempt to use any Tsukumo-Gami Boons she possesses on it, just as if she were in the being's physical presence. The kami can also cause to materialize above the shrine an image of what's happening at the kami's physical location, allowing the Scion to remotely witness that location as the kami sees and hears it.

This contact lasts for a maximum number of minutes equal to the successes on the activation roll. The kami can break off contact as well if the Scion offends it.

The Impressed Spirit (Tsukumo-Gami • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Craft

Cost: 1 Legend (to transport)

The Scion goes out of her way to flatter the spirit of some treasured item she owns, by crafting in its presence tiny replicas of the item. She then wraps each replica up in a paper packet on which the name of the item and its immanent kami is written in elegant calligraphy.

For every six successes on the activation roll, the Scion creates one replica that is of such quality that the kami of the original item is duly impressed. Thereafter, the Scion may leave the item behind and just carry the replica with her. Then, if she needs the item, all she has to do is hold the paper-wrapped replica in her hand, spend a point of Legend and call out the name of the kami (or the item's name, if it has one). At that moment, the replica disappears in a puff of white flame and the actual item instantaneously appears in its place, no matter how far away it was.

The Scion can create as many effective replicas of an item at a time as her player gets multiples of six successes on the aforementioned roll. She can use this Boon to make replicas for as many different objects as her dots of Legend allow. The larger an object is, though, the more of her dots of Legend it requires. Guidelines on size versus Legend are as follows:

Object Examples	Legend Requirement
Pistol, Set of Paintbrushes, Book	1
Sword, Guitar, Laptop Computer	2
Spear, Easel, Loaded Golf Bag	4
Motorcycle, Full Suit of Plate Armor	6
Pickup Truck, Fan Boat	8
Camper Trailer, Train Caboose	10

For Example: A Scion with Legend 6 can make effective replicas of one motorcycle. Alternatively, she could make effective replicas of one spear and two pistols. Alternatively, she could make effective replicas of six different books.

The Blinded Spirit (Tsukumo-Gami • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Occult

Cost: 3 Legend (+ 1 Willpower)

The Scion recites certain prayers backward and fills a small enclosure with a cloying pall of incense smoke. Having done so, she may then place another Scion's stolen Birthright relic into the smoky enclosure, bind it with prayer strips decorated with mirror-reversed kanji and leave it there for 24 hours. When she removes the relic, she finds its kami disoriented and confused, unsure of where it is or who has possession of it. The Scion's player then makes a (Manipulation + Occult) roll for the character to convince the disoriented spirit that it has been recovered by its rightful master. If the roll succeeds, the relic functions for the Scion who's taken possession of it just as it normally does for the Scion for whom it was originally intended. That is, the Scion thief can make full use of the Boons normally accessed through it without her player having to make the Legend roll described on page 162 of **Scion: Hero** (under "Stolen Relics"). The relic's kami remains disoriented and helpful for a number of days equal to the successes rolled to confuse it, at which point it comes to its senses and realizes how it's been tricked. When that happens, the kami makes certain that the relic will no longer function at all (even in terms of its mundane purpose) for the thief who was using it. Also, the effect ends immediately if the relic's original owner reclaims the object.

If the Scion who performs this Boon spends one Willpower point when her player makes the activation roll, she can designate one alternative person who can use the relic as if it were his own. She cannot use it herself if she does so, but neither will the item's kami be offended at her once it regains its senses or has been reclaimed by the item's true owner. It will instead be offended at the person whom the Scion designated as its illicit owner.

IMPOSED VIRTUES

Mortal characters don't have Virtue ratings. That isn't to say they can't uphold the values that the Virtues espouse, but they aren't held to the same high standards of behavior that Scions are. When a demigod Scion uses a Boon that imposes a Virtue rating on a mortal, though, the mortal does indeed act as if he were held to that divine standard. As such, that mortal may apply the standard benefits of his imposed Virtue ratings as listed on page 117 of **Scion: Hero**. The disadvantages, however, are more intense for a mortal than they are for Scions. If a mortal attempts to suppress a behavior in keeping with an imposed Virtue, the player must roll a number of dice equal to that imposed Virtue's rating. If he fails, the character loses a point of Willpower and may act as he pleases. If he succeeds, the character not only must act in the way he's trying to suppress, but he immediately suffers a Virtue Extremity regardless of how many successes turned up on the roll.

(These rules apply only when a *demigod* Scion uses a power to impose Virtues on a mortal. Heroic Scions' uses of powers—primarily Jotunblut—grant normal Virtues)

THE ABDUCTED SPIRIT (TSUKUMO-GAMI • • • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Tsukumo-Gami

Cost: 1 Willpower + 1 Legend

If the Scion's player succeeds on a (Charisma + Tsukumo-Gami) roll against a kami's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll while the Scion is either in the kami's presence or using The Summoned Spirit (Tsukumo-Gami • • • •) to speak to the kami, the kami is forced to instantly appear before the Scion in its fully material form. For the rest of the scene, the kami is honor-bound to defer to and obey the Scion as if it were a follower (per the Birthright of that name). Another Scion with this Purview can wrest control of the kami from the first Scion, but only if A.) his Legend is higher, and B.) he gets more successes on the activation roll than the original Scion did. A Scion can use this Boon as many times in the same scene, and on as many different spirits, as she has Legend and Willpower to spend. A spirit targeted by this Boon must have a lower Legend rating than that of the character attempting to target it.

SPECIAL PURVIEWS

These Purviews are associated with specific Gods, but they are available to Scions of any heritage. Their dots are bought in sequence, representing a growing mastery of the Purview. A demigod must have a Birthright relic to use these Purviews unless they are associated specifically with his divine parent.

MAGIC

This Purview doesn't exactly have Boons. Instead, each of its discrete effects is considered a spell. Spells are a Scion's means of playing merry havoc with the skein of Fate, twisting a victim's destiny to his own ends. Scions with this Purview design their own spells, but an example is given for each level of advancement. Inherent in each of these spells is the power to undo someone else's application of the same spell. Using a spell on a victim automatically Fatebinds the victim to the Scion. (See pp. 221–226 of **Scion: Hero** for rules and effects of Fatebinding.)

A Scion gains one free new spell of the increased value for each new dot of the Magic Purview he gets. Additional spells of equal or lesser value are purchased individually as Boons of the all-purpose Purviews are.

Associated With: Frigg, Hera, Hermes, Huitzilopochtli, Isis, Kalfu, Loki, Odin, Tezcatlipoca, Thoth

FATEFUL CONNECTION (MAGIC • • • •)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult

Cost: 1 Legend

When the Scion has some sympathetic link to a victim, he can perform this spell over it to loop that victim's fate around it and cinch it tight. Thereafter, the Scion can affect the victim with targeted Boons or spells remotely through the sympathetic link, regardless of how far away the victim is.

Such a link should be either a piece or a secretion from the victim's body that carries a detectable DNA trace back to her. Alternatively, it could be some unique object to which the victim has a strong emotional connection.

FATE PRISON (MAGIC • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Command

Cost: 1 Willpower + 1 Legend

With either a curse or an extremely well-worded request, the Scion binds a victim's fate to a physical

location. The location is 500 square feet in area per dot of Legend the Scion has, but it can take any shape the Scion desires, in order to conform to an existing structure's floor plan. The victim's player resists this spell by spending one Legend point and making an opposing (Charisma + Legend) roll.

A trapped victim cannot leave the area to which the Scion binds her. She's physically tethered there by her own destiny.

FATE AND SWITCH (MAGIC • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Empathy
Cost: 2 Legend + 1 Willpower

The Scion can twist together the threads of two intelligent beings' destinies at two separate points then cross the strands over in the middle. So doing, he switches the two victims' personalities between their bodies. Each switched character uses either her own or her host's Attributes as follows:

Her Own	Her Host Body's
Charisma	Strength
Manipulation	Dexterity
Intelligence	Stamina
Wits	Appearance
	Perception

Most of the character's Abilities transfer over with the personality, excepting Fortitude and Presence. A character's Willpower rating makes the transition with her as well. If one of the switched bodies is that of a Scion, the newcomer can use any of the Scion's Epic Attributes and Knacks, as those derive from the physical stuff of one's ichor. The imposter can use only those of the Scion's Boons that the Scion normally channels through a Birthright relic—and only if the newcomer retains possession of said relic. Doing so, however, counts as using a stolen relic. Unfortunately, if a switched-out Scion gets a hold of her own relic, it *still* functions as if it had been stolen until she's back in her rightful body.

One potential upside to being a victim of this spell is that both victims use the higher of their two Legend ratings for the duration of the time they spend switched. The person whose Legend is normally lower, however, doubles any Legend-point costs she incurs while she's in the wrong body. She can spend it to do anything a Scion can normally spend Legend to do. It just costs her twice as much.

The two victims remain switched for, at most, a number of weeks equal to the spellcaster's Legend. The spellcaster can end the effect earlier at will.

TRANSFORM PERSON (MAGIC • • • • • • •)

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Occult
Cost: 1 Legend per dot of Boon

By twisting his own Fate together with that of his victim, the Scion can use any one of his own self-transformation Boons on the victim's body instead. Acceptable self-transformation Boons include the following: Animal Aspect (Animal •••), Animal Feature (Animal ••••• •), Animal Form (Animal ••••• ••), Earth Body (Earth ••••• •), Natural Camouflage (Fertility ••••), Devil Body (Fire ••••• ••), Phase Cloak (Moon •••), Phase Body (Moon ••••• •), Burn (Sun •••••), Warrior Ideal (War •••).

To effect this transformation, the Scion's player makes this Boon's activation roll and spends Legend points equal to the number of dots the transformation Boon is worth. He must also make any activation roll and pay any cost listed in the chosen Boon's write-up. The victim's player reflexively resists the (Dexterity + Occult) roll with a (Stamina + Fortitude + Legend) roll of her own—even if the victim *wants* the spellcaster to affect her. The Scion can effect only one transformation on a given subject at a time, and he cannot transform any being with a higher Legend than his own. Being transformed by this spell adds one dot to the victim's Legend for the duration of the effect. The transformation remains in effect indefinitely—or at least until the victim dies or is destroyed.

MYSTERY

The demigod level of Mystery doesn't change in the way it works from the heroic level (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 155). All that changes at this level is that the player has more dice to roll and her character doesn't strictly need her Mystery relic if the Purview is associated with her divine parent.

Associated With: Damballa, Dionysus, Isis, Odin, Tezcatlipoca

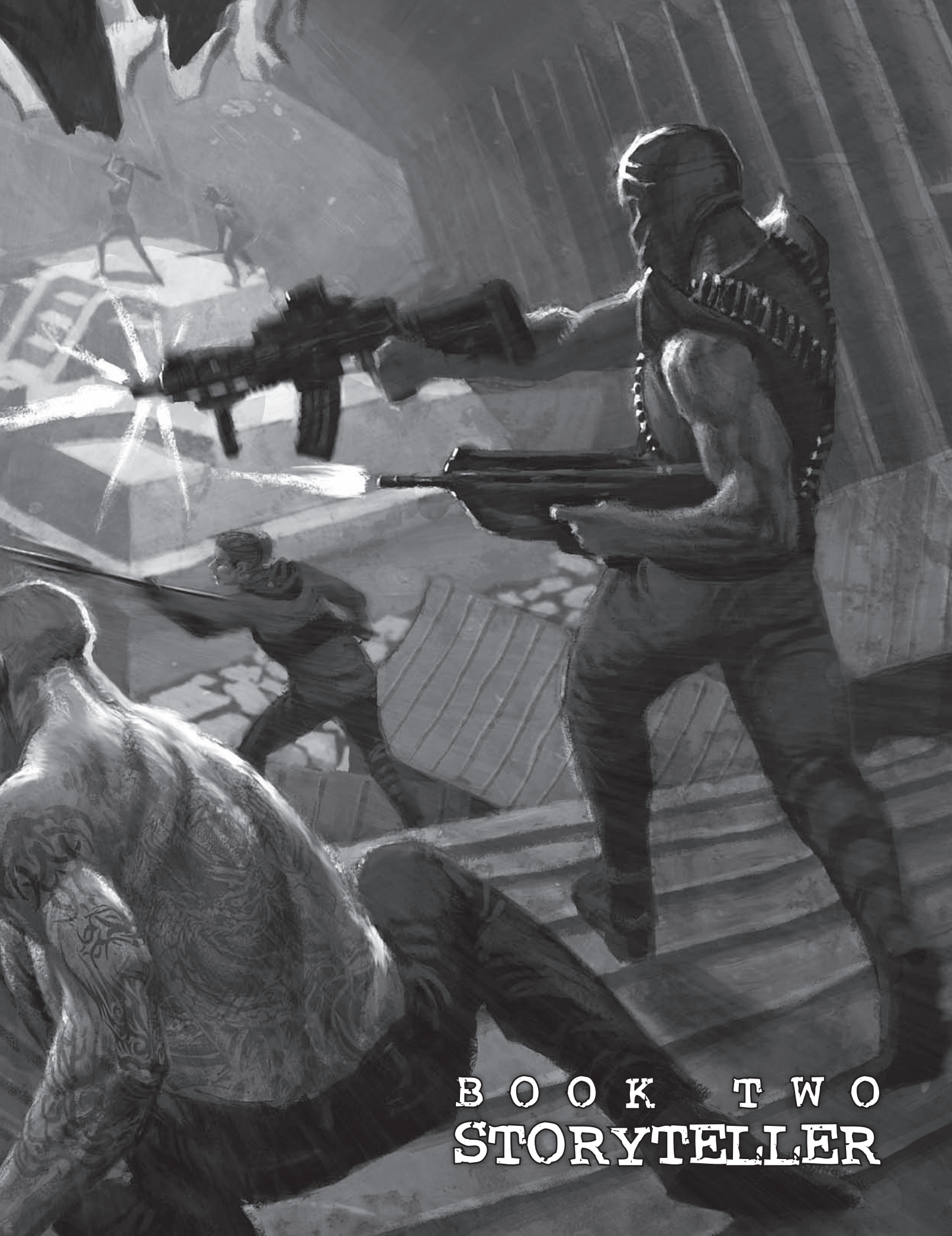
Dice Pool: Intelligence + Mystery

PROPHECY

The demigod level of Prophecy doesn't change in the way it works from the heroic level (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 156). All that changes at this level is that the player has more dice to roll and his character doesn't strictly need his Prophecy relic if the Purview is associated with his divine parent.

Associated With: Apollo, Bastet, Frigg, Legba, Odin, Shango, Tezcatlipoca

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Prophecy



BOOK TWO
STORYTELLER

UNKNOWN LANDS

What follows are some of the unusual places Scions might venture in their quest to defeat the Titans and their spawn. They offer to both Scions and their enemies a number of unique advantages that make them valuable targets in the current conflict, be it as staging grounds, means of rapid deployment, sources of troops or places of rest and recuperation. Scions can encounter three types of mystic places in the World. They include strange sites (odd places that don't fit the definitions of the other two types), Touchstones (places that represent a particular archetypal idea in the Overworld and allow access to the true home of that idea) and terrae incognitae (literal lost lands obscured from the World, the most famous of which is Atlantis). Also featured are the Underworld realms of the six pantheons, scene of the Titans' escape and perhaps key to their capture once again.

TOUCHSTONES

There are many sites of ancient craftsmanship or symbolic importance all over the World that resonate deeply in both the Overworld and the imaginations of humankind. These sites—and the symbols or architecture thereof—have been repeated time and again as humans seek inspiration in classical, legendary archetypes.

The creators of the Statue of Liberty, for instance, looked to the Colossus of Rhodes for inspiration. Stonehenge inspired replicas all over the globe, including one in Texas, another in Washington state, and even one in Nebraska made entirely from cars. The Great Sphinx in Egypt has been replicated in Las Vegas's Luxor Hotel and Casino. Although the result might seem tacky and disrespectful (or simply humorous), the fact that these sites share in the original's resonance cannot be disputed.

Scions refer to these sites as Touchstones, named for the simple tools used to determine the purity of a metal or stone. Those who dwell in the mythic reality of the Gods and Titans understand that these places are connected in some fashion that allows their kind—i.e., any creature with a Legend trait—to travel from the earthly Touchstone to the true, Platonic ideal of that site or monument. Such ideals exist in a type of terra incognita that exists not because it plays an important legendary role, but because it has taken hold of the human imagination to such a degree that it cannot *help* but exist there.

Touchstones are considered sites of tremendous value, as the travel is not one way. It is possible to travel from Stonehenge in Salisbury Plain to the Great Henge and thence to Stonehenge II in Texas. These shortcuts are available, obviously, only to those capable of traveling the mythic pathways that lie between the sites. Of course,

it is rarely as easy as all that. Some entity or another—recognizing Touchstones for their tactical value in the upcoming conflict—has almost invariably seized the Touchstone and must be bargained with or fought to use the site. Other Touchstones, representing the hero's journey, occult initiation or travel into unknown places, possess their own tests and dangers.

Travel by way of a Touchstone is relatively simple. Scions and other creatures of Legend must enter the site of a Touchstone and find its center. This is often the focal point of the Legend imbued in the site itself, though its precise location is not always where visitors might assume. If the player spends a point of Legend and makes an extended (Perception + Occult) roll, requiring a total of 10 successes, the Scion can find its focal point. (Using Psychopomp ••••• successfully does the same thing.) Once a Scion knows where that focal point is, he need only touch it—or stand there, in some cases—and spend a point of Legend to travel to the true site. Scions must be cautious in doing so, however, as such a display of Legendary power will Fatebind every mortal who witnesses it.

THE GREAT HENGE

It is thought that many places throughout history have connected the World with the Great Henge—Stonehenge is simply the oldest known in the modern era. Those who appear in the Great Henge find themselves in a great monument of white marble standing upon a grassy hill in an endless grassland. The Henge itself is twice as large as any of its earthly replicas. Its central stone is a large piece of crystal imbedded in the turf. Although it seems to have tiny characters chiseled into it, the surface of the stone is completely smooth. The writing is actually below the surface of the crystal, and it shifts imperceptibly, changing words, phrases and the written languages in which they are written when no one is looking. Even languages no longer known in the World appear here, and many Legend-touched diviners and prophets find these writings exceedingly useful in the practice of their arts. Anyone who travels away from the Great Henge may only do so until it is just out of sight. At the very moment a traveler loses sight of the Henge behind him, it suddenly appears on the horizon in the opposite direction.

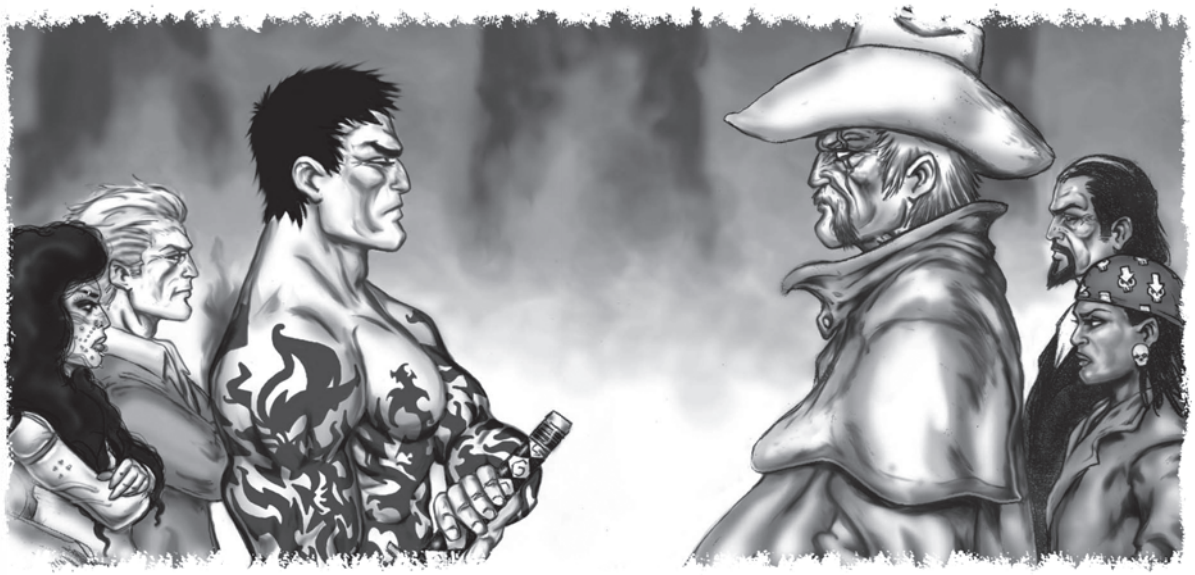
By ancient compact, the Great Henge is a neutral place. Even the Gods and Titans must obey the neutrality of the place, enforced as it is by Fate. Those who would seek to engage in violence against one another find themselves wracked with horrific agony and rendered unconscious, awakening several hours later at the place where they fell. No one may strike or even pick up the unconscious form of one thus stricken without falling victim to the effect as well.

The skies above the Great Henge turn ever onward, an eternal dance of stars and planets long lost to the World. Those with the Prophecy Purview who come here seeking answers of Fate find that the stars in the sky above unfold great secrets. Though it costs a point of Willpower to do so, the player of a Scion or God who uses the Prophecy Purview while standing at the Great Henge may add a number of automatic successes equal to the character's Legend.

Travelers who arrive here must delay a full hour before traveling to another of the Great Henge's focal points, allowing the stars in its sky to shift sufficiently to grant passage once more.

Stonehenge, Salisbury Plain, England: The oldest known of the Great Henge's Touchstones, England's Stonehenge has seen better days. Currently in the middle of bureaucratic indecision and public outcry, its fate is unknown. The A303 road that runs near it has been determined to be detrimental to the well-being of the English Heritage site, but the government and public are at an impasse trying to strike a balance between preserving the site and keeping it accessible to the public for viewing. The so-called Altar Stone of Stonehenge is its focal point.

Maryhill Stonehenge, Maryhill, Washington, US: Originally created by millionaire Samuel Hill as a memorial



for the men of Klickitat County killed in World War I, the Maryhill Stonehenge sits on a cliff overlooking the Columbia River Gorge below. It is somewhat smaller than the original Stonehenge and not aligned astronomically to match its inspiration, as it's aligned to the midsummer sunrise at its true position on the virtual horizon, rather than its apparent position based on the surroundings. The site's Altar Stone serves as its focal point.

Stonehenge Aotearoa, New Zealand: Approximately an hour's drive from Wellington, New Zealand, stands the Stonehenge Aotearoa. Constructed as a demonstration to show how ancient peoples used such constructions to understand astronomy, Stonehenge Aotearoa still sees occasional visitors. The five-meter-tall obelisk that stands in its center acts as the site's focal point.

Carhenge, Alliance, Nebraska, US: Built in 1987, Carhenge consists of a Stonehenge replica made entirely out of cars spray painted with gray primer. A whimsical site, Carhenge actually duplicates the current appearance of Stonehenge, rather than the original design that so many replicas prefer. A 1962 Cadillac, which serves as its heelstone, is the site's focal point.

THE COLOSSUS

Standing tall, holding aloft the beacon of light, with solar rays radiating from its head like a halo, the Colossus is a great symbol to the World. In times past, the Touchstones of the Colossus have been constructed of copper and bronze—all solar metals, to be sure—but the Colossus itself is crafted of shining gold, with accents rendered in purest orichalc. Its visage is beautiful. To some, it wears the strong features of a heroic man, while to others, its features are those of a patrician woman, strong and proud. Clad in shining armor and flowing robes, its gender is indeterminate: the Colossus is the symbol of freedom for all men and women. The great statue, which is at least twice as tall as any earthly Touchstone of the Colossus has ever been, stands upon a great island-foundation of white, bleached marble.

The Colossus, as it exists in the Otherworld, stands for the ideals of a people. When a people wish to celebrate their freedom, this great Colossus stands out in the human psyche. Shining like the sun itself, with full solar attributes and a great beacon that lights the way of those who are free from tyranny, the Colossus beckons. "Come," it seems to say, its visage serene and proud. "We are a free people. Join us."

Arrivals to the Colossus appear standing on a large circular seal of gold inset in the edge of the foundation. Only one such seal still exists—the seal marked with the silhouette of the Statue of Liberty. There are other such seals inset in the foundation, though they are all cracked and tarnished, the only remnants of other Touchstones swallowed by history.

Those who appear at the site of the Colossus stand upon a great marble foundation surrounded by water. Its sweeping robes bear a yawning passage at the foot of the great monument, decorated with an eternally lit torch above the doorway. A plaque of gold is inset beneath it, with two words—Liberty and Glory—writ upon it. Those who view the plaque see the words displayed in their native language, and even those who cannot read see strange symbols that reveal their meaning.

This passage allows entry into the interior of the Colossus. Within lies only a great, winding white marble staircase that leads ever upward, to the great open platform that is the torch it holds aloft. A golden bonfire burns there, whipping about wildly in the strong winds, though its flames don't burn flesh. In fact, standing in the flames and spending a point of Willpower can completely replenish the Legend points of any Scion with Boons from the Fire, Guardian, Justice or Sun Purviews.

Those who appear at the base of the Colossus must travel to the top of the monument and touch the flames before they are allowed to leave. Fate has mandated that those who come to see the glory of freedom must experience it.

The Colossus of Rhodes: Long fallen is the Colossus of Rhodes, its glory crumbled. Conceptualized as a depiction of Helios, sun God, its bronze pieces were sold to merchants and the symbol of a nation's freedom from tyranny vanished. In recent years, however, Rhodes has undertaken investigation into the possibility of recreating the Colossus—a piece of their past, surely, though proposed as a means of increasing tourism. Should such a thing happen, its seal at the foundation of the Colossus would surely repair itself and shine once more.

The Statue of Liberty: Properly named *Liberty Enlightening the World*, the Statue of Liberty is a great copper statue depicting a woman, clad in robes. On her head is a crown of seven solar rays, representing the seven seas and the seven continents. In her left hand, she bears a tablet with the inscription "JULY IV MDCCLXXVI," the date of the United States Declaration of Independence. In her right, she holds aloft a torch, its carved flame covered in gold leaf. The Statue of Liberty today stands as the only remaining Touchstone of the Colossus in the World. The site's focal point is the plaque at the base of the Statue, inscribed with Emma Lazarus' poem, "The New Colossus."

The seal of the Statue of Liberty at the base of the Colossus may actually be used to reach any one of a number of Statues of Liberty around the World. In addition to the original Statue of Liberty, touching the seal and spending a Legend point can take someone to the sister of the original Statue (which is in France), to the statue in the New York, New York Casino (which is in Las Vegas), to any of the ones donated to the Boy Scouts in various places around the US or to a variety of others. The downside is that these lesser Statues of Liberty cannot be used to reach the Colossus. They are emanations of the Statue of Liberty's reflection of the idealized Colossus, and therefore far more limited in their connections. They contribute and add nothing to

the concept, so legendary travel using them flows always from the Colossus to the replicas—never the reverse.

OTHER TOUCHSTONES

Other Touchstones exist around the World. Many monuments and other inspirational places have moved mankind to re-create them, time and again, such as the Great Sphinx of Egypt (which shares a connection with several sites all over the World, including Las Vegas) or Mount Olympus (which is connected not only to several other mountains named for it, but also a theme park in Wisconsin by the same name).

STRANGE SITES

Simply put, there are some places in the World where the influence and touch of the Overworld or Underworld are simply undeniable. These places aren't passages to other realms, nor do they serve as connections to Platonic manifestations of an idea or place. These are simply places where Legend has bled through into the World, where Scions and the Gods have worked Fatebinding—on accident or deliberately—one too many times, or where the relics of the mythic ages of the past are gathered. Some of these places are simply locations where the Gods walk among their worshipers and are recognized as such.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

There are places where the relics of ancient civilizations and pre-Christian religions are gathered. The rites of Apollo or the sacred dances of African ancestor rituals have never been performed there, but they strongly resonate with the power of those places nonetheless. People come in droves to see these relics—not because of what the items are themselves, but because of what they represent. They are physical representations of the historical and cultural diversity of humanity. To see the sarcophagus of Tutankhamen is to imagine oneself standing in the burial chamber as he was mummified, with chants to Anubis echoing off slave-erected stone walls.

This is the closest many will ever come to communion with the Gods, to experiencing the old rites, but that is enough. In such places, Legend swells, buoyed on the imaginations of the people who come to visit the place. This potential, left untapped, can sometimes accumulate and cause all manner of strange things to happen. Scions know this, and often seek out places where the relics of their parents' pantheons are on display.

The foremost of these places is the British Museum.

WEIRDNESS BUILDS

Without an active divine or Scion will to focus ambient Legend, it remains subtle and unnoticed by mortals. Although Legend wielded by Scions is not inhibited by the presence of bystanders, the ambient fields of Legend that build up in certain sites never manifest strong effects—unless the area is left alone or there are very few people around.

People who find themselves alone in one of the Legend-rich portions of the British Museum, for instance, might hear whispers in dead languages or see sunlight reflect off the gold of a sarcophagus lid in a room without windows. They might smell rich, spicy incense lingering in the air or see movement out of the corner of their eyes. At night, when such places are closed, the Legend peaks, unrestrained by the mundane concerns and disbelief of everyday mortals. The British Museum's night watchmen know that strange things happen in the building's dark places, and many of them are quite superstitious as a result. Stories abound of ghosts haunting the corridors, clad in ancient funereal garb and speaking lost tongues. Rumors of strange creatures—fauns and tengu and other things from the legends of a hundred cultures—are common, and with good reason: Legend provides them passage.

Generally speaking, such phenomena are uncommon. Certainly, weird noises and visual manifestations happen at night, but the actual appearance of creatures happens only after a "spike" in the local levels of Legend. Such spikes usually occur only after some event involving an exhibit or particular relic draws a great deal of mortal attention. The sudden media-driven attention to that part of the Museum can cause the Legend there to swell, and strange things happen. Maenads might run screaming through the corridors late at night, clawing at the doors where night watchmen and janitors have barricaded themselves for protection. Sarcophagi may burst open to reveal terrible swarms of scarab beetles.

TAPPING LEGEND

Though strange things can happen where Legend collects, rarely does it reach the proverbial boiling point. Creatures of Legend are capable of tapping into the accumulation and refueling their own mythic resources. As a result, such places often see visiting entities seeking to use that power for themselves. Before the shattering of the Titans' prison, those entities were generally the Gods themselves, walking among mortals in human form. Since the shattering of the prison, however, those who seek to tap these resources are generally Scions.

A Scion or God who wishes to tap into the power that sits uncollected like dew on a leaf must actually come to the British Museum. All that is required is that the Scion enter the Department appropriate to

his pantheon. With a few moments of meditation, he can touch the source of power and drink it in. Doing so automatically provides a single point of Legend to all creatures of Legend that do this.

Harvesting Legend

In areas of high Legend concentration, Scions of the appropriate pantheon can do even more. In such areas, the player rolls the Scion's Legend rating as a miscellaneous action, spending a point of Willpower. Each success garners him a point of Legend with which to refill his Legend pool. This is referred to by Scions and Gods as "harvesting." Areas of very strong Legend, such as the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan in the British Museum, can provide one or two harvests per day to Scions or Gods of the appropriate pantheon.

Some event that provides a great upwelling of interest in that culture's relics at the museum—such as a daring theft of a relic or the opening of a long-anticipated exhibit—can increase this amount. It could allow the number of harvests in a collection to increase as well, particularly if it attracts many new viewers and media attention.

OPTIONS

Considering the kind of power a site like the British Museum generates, it would not be surprising for Scions to contest "ownership" of such a place, battling among themselves for the right to the Legend harvests to be found there. Indeed, entire gatherings of Scions might lay claim to these kinds of sites, potentially even going so far as to use their influence and abilities to improve the kinds of exhibits the museum acquires, so as to bolster its Legend generation.

THE ISLAND OF GHOSTS, JAPAN

Abandoned and rusting, the Island of Ghosts sits off the coast of Nagasaki. With a circumference of 1.2 kilometers, the Island of Ghosts—properly called Hashima—is tiny. Once, however, it was the most densely populated city in Japan. Tall concrete buildings stand closely to one another, huddled together for space and safety against typhoons. A four-meter-tall wall of concrete surrounds the island to aid in that protection. Hashima was developed as a coal mine, and at one point boasted a population density six times that of Manhattan. The living spaces and businesses that catered to the coal miners were all interconnected by a maze of stairs, hallways and small courtyards.

A symbol of Japan's sudden growth and industrialization, and a victim of a changing World that abandoned coal in favor of petroleum, the Island of Ghosts went from a thickly populated isolated community to a ghost town in less than a decade. Today, there is no life on Hashima—only the barest of green plant life exists, growing wild on the tops of buildings where wind-blown soil has accumulated and in the very few alleyways that ever see sunlight throughout the day. Seagulls and a few other seabirds nest in the heights here, and the buildings of concrete and steel slowly collapse under their own weight.

But there is more to Hashima than decay.

BRITISH MUSEUM ADVENTURE HOOK

Late one night, a small group of men and women—an occult organization called the Fraternity of the Ancient Aeon—breaks into the British Museum. Going immediately to the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan, they hold a strange glass lens over the Rosetta Stone. Seen through the odd device, the simple words of Pharaonic decree warp and twist, revealing the words of a spell imbued into the very stones. The Rosetta Stone, a relic of Ptolemaic Egypt, is the focus for a strange piece of magic that requires the power of the Egyptian Gods to return one of Ptolemy's blood to life. Fortunately, the British Museum's Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan resonates with just that kind of power, and the mummy of Cleopatra lies conveniently at hand.

Although the process kills two of their number, the occultists perform the rite and raise the corpse of Cleopatra—only to discover that whatever they've called from Duat is not the lover of Julius Caesar and Marc Antony. A terrible spectre in service to the Titans now walks the land as a powerful hungry corpse. It must continually feed upon the Legend of the Egyptian Gods, however, which means haunting museums… and hunting down Scions of the Pesedjet to eat their flesh.

THE HOWLING DEAD

For years, Hashima has simply been abandoned. Imagine an old, rotting house at the end of a bleak street scaled up to the size of an entire industrialized island. Children in nearby Nagasaki tell stories about the horrors that must lurk in the island's shadows. In recent years, many of these stories have shared similarities with popular Japanese horror films. The most disturbing urban legends often include the ghosts of children—strangely white creatures of equal parts pathos and terror, with unsettling black eyes.

Unfortunately for the island of Hashima, the power of such tales resonates with the power of Legend. When the Titans' prison shattered, Yomi was cast adrift. The realms of the dead sought for any and all anchors to the World, lest they drift away into the void, and the Island of Ghosts provided one such connection.

The urban decay of Hashima resonated strongly with the great city of the dead that surrounds the Yellow Spring Mountain, and a connection was forged. Suddenly, certain ghosts walking the streets of the underworld might turn a corner and find themselves in the dilapidated ruins of Hashima. Only modern ghosts ever accidentally find themselves there—the souls of modern Japan, who died in ways incomprehensible to their ancestors.

The dead of Hashima are not the peaceful, benevolent dead found elsewhere in Japan. They aren't the quaint ancestors of ancient Nippon, clad in funereal finery. These are the ghosts of those who died from distinctly modern causes. The ghosts of schoolchildren who committed suicide, driven to the brink of despair by academic pressure. These are the shades of corporate drones, killed by stress and depression from the weight of their responsibilities and dearth of outlets for that pressure. These are the people who died during drug binges or in war camps.

Ghosts haunt these ruins, and they're furious. Many of them believe that Yomi has cast them out for being too modern, for being too unlike the Japan of old. These angry ghosts take their rage out on the living when they can. Otherwise, they wait and surround themselves in the rotting industrial morass of Hashima.

Worse yet, even the dead have something to fear here, for the spirits of the slaves who mined the coal of Hashima never left this place. Those souls are now spectres—often the ghosts of non-Japanese captured during war or occupation in other nations and forced into hard labor. Occasionally, the dark mines beneath the ground spit out a horde of angry, sooty spectres who come bearing the chains with which they were imprisoned in life. When they find other ghosts, they lash out with those chains. Some spirits they beat senseless, others they imprison and drag back into the darkness of the mines below, never to be seen again.

TERRAE INCOGNITAE

Coined by early cartographers to label areas that hadn't yet been explored, Scions use the term "terra incognita" to refer to any place that's more than it seems to be to humanity. Terrae incognitae proper are a specific subset of those places, locations that, while still in the World, are no longer accessible to it and may hold great interest to both Scion and titanspawn in the coming days of conflict.

The early history of man is filled with stories of wondrous places that later were deemed fantasy, rather

than reality. Despite copious reports of early travelers visiting them, palaces, cities, even entire islands were written off as fable and legend as the "Age of Reason" replaced the Era of Exploration. As they meticulously mapped the continents and circumnavigated the globe by sea, modern cartographers reasoned that if they could not reliably pinpoint a location's position, it must not exist. Entire civilizations were erased from history based on this premise, as historians blamed the tales of their existence on poor communication, inaccurate record-keeping and, occasionally, outright lies. The reality, however, is a bit more complicated.

In the decades and centuries after the Gods withdrew from the World, the supernatural beings left behind were in a perilous position. Most were not sufficiently powerful either to be locked away with their Titan masters or to be accepted as Gods themselves and allowed to participate in the Gods' withdrawal into the Overworld. However, they no longer garnered the support and protection of their fully deified kindred and found themselves more and more at the whim of the increasingly powerful and organized forces of mankind.

Their reactions to their newfound vulnerability, most often, were either to withdraw as far from human contact as possible or to find a way to hide in plain sight without raising humanity's suspicions. With the freeing of the Titans from their Underworld prison and the ensuing chaos in the Overworld, however, many are rethinking these plans and preparing themselves for the war they suspect may spill out into the World in the near future. Because of this, locations that have remained hidden from human eyes for centuries are beginning to resurface, and many of the entities who have sequestered themselves away are beginning to turn their eyes toward the future, often to humanity's misfortune.

AEAEA: THE ISLAND OF CIRCE

Known to the Greeks as the Island of the Dawn, Aeaea lies off the southwestern coast of Italy in the Tyrrhenian Sea. While early explorers knew of its existence, modern cartographers have failed to record its presence. This discrepancy is due in no small part to the unique enchantments protecting the island. Save for the earliest moments of morning, when the purest rays of sunlight pierce its protective illusions, the only time the island is visible is when it behooves its mistress for it to be so—most often when she sees the opportunity to trifle with the lives of those who pass near her home.

Scions rank highly among those for whom Circe will drop the island's protective illusions. Should a Band of Scions approach, they will find the small island quite visible and inviting. White-sand beaches encircle the island, providing safe landing for all but the largest of vessels, and the waters surrounding Aeaea are calm and warm, as befits a Mediterranean paradise.

Upon arriving on the shores of Aeaea, travelers are greeted by a strange sight. An entire pack of wolves and a pride of lions, races out of the dense forest at the island's center, dashing toward the shoreline as the travelers make their way up the coast. While seeing the two groups of animals together is strange enough, their reaction upon reaching the travelers is even more disconcerting. As long as they're offered no violence, the beasts greet the new arrivals as a beloved pack of hunting hounds might their returning master. The wolves roll over, belly up, tongues lolling as they beg for attention. The only damage the lions might cause is to knock over someone as they attempt to wind in and around the traveler's feet like oversized house cats. This is not to say, however, that the creatures will not retaliate if attacked. They are fully grown and quite capable of defending themselves if the newcomers seem determined to fight. (See pp. 330 and 332 of **Scion: Hero** for traits for these animals.)

The entire circumference of the island takes less than four hours to circumnavigate, with white sand beaches all around. Just inside the broad beach line, travelers are presented with a thick expanse of broad-leaf forest. Oaks stretch upward of 70 feet tall, and the undergrowth is thick and healthy, making crossing the forest slow going. In each of the four cardinal directions, however, there is a broad and inviting pathway paved with chipped marble, which runs through the forest away from the beach. Each leads toward the center of the island. After an hour's walk, each ends in the expansive courtyard of Circe's palace.

While traversing the island, either through the forest or by the pathways, travelers encounter a wide variety of animal life, much of which seems out of place for the forest environment. While stag, bear and boar may be at home in the deciduous wood, tigers, gorillas and elephants seem quite out of place there. All animals encountered react to the travelers as the lions and wolves on the beach did, offering no violence unless it is inflicted upon them first.

CIRCE'S PALACE

Located in a clearing surrounded by a dense oak forest at the center of the island, Circe's palace is as impressive today as it was when Odysseus' crew first beheld its glory. Its marble walls gleam bone-white, reflecting the sun with an intensity capable of blinding those who look upon it in full daylight. The courtyard is broad and inviting, with fountains and gardens circling the palace on all sides. No walls prevent entry to the courtyard, and the entire first floor of the palace itself is mostly open to the garden, using archways rather than doors. The pathways seem to invite travelers further in, and many of the trees and plants hang ripe with fruit and blossoming flowers. Exotic animals make themselves at home in the gardens as well. Several species of wildcat lounge on woven tapestry cushions around the main seating area, where ice-cold drinks and a small banquet of food has invariably been laid out on a low table.

Within, the living chambers are lavishly appointed with comfortable furniture and luxurious decorations

that span more than 3,000 years of craftsmanship. The ornate tapestries and rugs that are found throughout the mansion, however, are all classic Greek in their design and are similar enough in styling to suggest having been made by the same artist. Close examination reveals that the tapestries document hundreds of stories, most centering around a beautiful woman with jet-black hair. They also feature all manner of animals, from the mundane to the monstrous, and a wide variety of rather plain-looking men and women, but the dark-haired woman is present in every woven tale.

Within a few minutes of their arrival, the island's mistress greets the travelers, offering them refreshment in the form of the cold drinks and banquet. Circe, who delicately consumes a bit herself, seems quite slighted should they refuse to partake. Should the travelers have already availed themselves, she seems even more pleased. Any who partake of the bounty of Circe's banquet (food or beverage) ingest the herbal concoction with which she has laced the banquet.

CIRCE'S MAGIC

Circe is a powerful sorceress, but is also titanspawn, being the daughter of the solar Titan Helios and Perse (herself the child of two sea Titans.) She has access to three types of magic: illusion, potions and her wand.

Illusion: Her illusionary magic is all related to the juxtaposition of light and water, a legacy from her Titan parents. It gives her the ability to bend light, essentially making a target invisible to outside perception. She utilizes this predominantly to hide herself and her island, but can use it on other targets as well.

Potions: Circe has spent millennia on her island. She knows every animal and plant there, including the supernatural effects that can be conjured from them. She has an extensive stillroom where she transforms the products of her island into potions that can duplicate the effects of many divine Boons. The limitation, however, is that the potions must be consumed by the target (herself or others) in order to take effect. Upon greeting new guests, she always laces their food with a potion that puts them to sleep (as per the Cradlesong Boon on p. 80). Targets that are asleep, either by natural or supernatural means, are at -4 dice to resist the effects of Circe's wand.

Wand: By use of her wand, Circe can attempt to transform any being into an animal form (see p. 238 for details). If the transformation is successful, the target is transformed into the shape of whatever animal Circe chooses (she's particularly fond of swine). A transformed individual retains his personality, Perception, Intelligence and Wits, however his physical body becomes that of a normal pig (with Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1 and Appearance 1.) Boons, Knacks and other supernatural abilities that rely on physical or social Abilities or traits cannot be used while in animal form, although mental Abilities can, as long as they don't require verbal communication. Transformed individuals lose the ability to speak, unless they are transformed into an animal that has that ability (such as parrots, crows, mynah, etc.).

MOTIVATIONS

Circe has little love for humanity, seeing them as in many ways identical to the animals into which she delights in transforming them. While each of them is insignificant, however, she realizes that the thronging masses could quickly overwhelm her, and she has no interest in putting an end to her essential immortality. She has grown accustomed to being the biggest fish in her pond, and while she would like to expand her influence further, she's not willing to overly risk what she has in order to do so. With the release of the Titans from the Underworld, however, she believes that the time might be right to begin building beyond her shores.

Like her parents before her, she believes the key to doing so is having children who can act on her behalf. Although Odysseus provided her with three sons who went on to become kings and leaders, they were still just mortals. With the arrival of modern Scions on her island, she believes the key to her new legacy has presented itself.

Circe figures that children who are half titanspawn, half Scion would be assured of a foothold in the World after the Overworld War, no matter which side wins. To this end, she'll use whatever abilities she has at her avail to make sure that at least one of the male Scions fathers a child with her during his time on the island. If simple seduction will not serve, she'll use this as a bargaining piece for restoring any transformed Scions back to their former selves or as a negotiating point for the information she possesses on the location of an entrance to the Underworld or oracular divination. As a titanspawn (and the daughter of a nymph who was born at the same time as 3,000 other siblings), she is more than capable of becoming pregnant with multiple children at one time, including those of different fathers. She won't hesitate to barter with every male Scion if possible.

THE UNDERWORLD

As one of the World's most powerful sorceresses and oracles (not to mention the child of a Titan and a nymph), Circe has access to a great deal of information that could be of use to Scions. Among this information is the location of a place whereby a demigod might access the Underworld. As she did for Odysseus, if properly placated, Circe can provide Scions with instructions on how to cross the body of water she calls "the backward-flowing river, Ocean," and eventually make their way to an entrance to the Underworld. This "river" is, in fact, the North Equatorial Current, which crosses the Atlantic Ocean and will lead the Band in the direction of the Bermuda Triangle. (See pp. 120-122 for details on the Palace of Agwe found in the Cayman Trench.)

If Circe hasn't yet convinced the male Scions present to grace her bedchambers, she will be careful to maintain at least some semblance of good relations with them. Her definition of the term, however, includes bribes, transforming them into animals, blackmail or holding several members of the Band hostage. She'll stop short of killing them, as long as there is a male member of the group with whom she hasn't yet had her way. Once that goal has been met, all bets are off.

OPTIONS

If it suits the cycle, the Storyteller can send the group southward by substituting the West Wind Drift as the "backward-flowing river," rather than the North Equatorial Current (see p. 138 for details on reaching the entrance of the Underworld through Mt. Erebus). This course would lead the Scions toward Antarctica (and Atlantis), rather than North or Central America.

Similarly, the Nile River could be substituted, taking the adventurers to Mount Manu and the Manu Passage, and thus to the Underworld. Alternatively, the term could be used to apply to any of the World's rivers that flow north (of which there are dozens, if not hundreds, scattered across every continent other than Antarctica). Using this logic, the Storyteller could take characters in almost any direction in search of the Underworld, allowing the cycle to be spun in any direction.

CIRCE'S ISLAND ADVENTURE HOOK

In the mid-1950s, a US Air Force B-47 disappeared over the Mediterranean. The jet was on a nonstop flight east from Florida to an overseas base, and failed to connect with the second of its two scheduled in-flight refueling appointments. The Air Force searched extensively for the aircraft, but no trace of the plane, its crew or the two nuclear weapons it was transporting was ever found. Nothing has been heard since then until this week, when the Italian government reported its work with the United States to recover the plane's wreckage off the north coast of Sicily. No mention is being made of the nuclear payload. Circe claims to have no knowledge of this incident, but titanspawn are not well known for telling the truth.

THE GARDEN OF THE HESPERIDES

Mankind has a unique ability among mortal creatures: the power to imagine. This ability sometimes allows the collective unconsciousness of mankind direct access into the esoteric primal stuff of the Overworld to conjure new creations into being. The spear and the wheel are thought to have been forged from early man's imagination, literally "dreamed into being" and then spontaneously cropped up in separate cultures throughout the World as early man grasped this collective imagining. But not all of man's dreamings are literal, tangible creations. From the time of man's first understanding of age and death as an eventuality that awaits all mankind, humans have dreamed of immortality. And that dream, like the spear and the wheel, became manifest in the form of the Golden Apples of Youth.

At first, these rare magical manifestations existed in the World. Many early stories tell of one brave adventurer or another going off to seek them out and eventually winning his own immortality. The Gods, however, were unwilling to share their immortality with humanity. Wherever these golden apples would manifest, the Gods sought them out and took them for themselves. Eventually, humanity's vision of these fruits came to change as well, as the collective consciousness envisioned them as the property of the Gods. When that happened, the fruits ceased to appear in the World altogether.

The Gods soon discovered that these manifestations of mortal imagination didn't survive long in the Overworld. Once taken into the Overworld proper, the fruits lost their ability to bestow immortality altogether, quickly withering and dying. Although the Gods didn't need the fruit's blessings themselves, they were reluctant to allow this potentially powerful tool to disappear altogether. They were also unwilling, however, to leave the apples in the World where they might be discovered by humans who might then challenge their own authority as immortals. Hera, pragmatic matriarch that she is, came up with the idea of carving a space that was neither in the Overworld nor accessible to humanity, where the apples could be preserved, even propagated, without danger. She created a location near one of her largest temples that could be entered only by those with divine heritage, then set about making certain that her allies, if no one else, would have access to this treasure in the future.

THE GARDEN

Hera made sure that she and her followers would have control of the Garden of the Hesperides by connecting the terra incognita directly to her largest and most used temple. Located on the furthest western shores of the Peloponnesus, the sanctuary at Olympia has been a sacred site for millennia. Over time, the wooden columns of the Doric temple where Hera was worshiped were replaced with stone ones, and after the Gods retreated to the Overworld, the temple eventually fell to ruin. Yet it is through its now-defunct passageways that the garden is accessed.

The Garden of the Hesperides itself is not large, matching the dimensions of the temple almost identically. Like the building, it is walled on all sides by Doric

THE APPLES OF YOUTH

Despite the legends, nothing is entirely immortal. Even the Gods themselves can be killed, if only by treachery or overwhelming force. And while the Gods learned it was very dangerous to do so (witness the near-destruction of the World when Ymir was slain), Titans can die as well. Likewise, no item or power can make someone immortal, in the sense of being unable to die, ever, under any circumstance. There is always a loophole, always a catch.

The Golden Apples of Youth's effects, while powerful, are transitory, much like youth itself. They will bestow youth upon those who consume them, but not forever. Any being who consumes one of the Golden Apples of Youth will be effectively restored to a healthy and youthful condition (early 20s for humans, similar life stages for other creatures). Any wounds, illness or poisons they were currently suffering from are healed, and they find themselves spry and rejuvenated for the period of one year. At the end of that year, however, their age descends upon them quickly. Over the period of the month following their year of youth, they quickly return to their chronological age, though they don't gain back the illnesses or injuries that afflicted them earlier. Eating more than one of the apples at a time doesn't grant a longer period of youth or reduce an individual to a younger age. Nor does consuming less than an entire apple grant a partial reduction in age. Only by eating an apple in its entirety is the youthful effect assured.

There is, however, benefit of consuming a part of a Golden Apple of Youth. The apple may be split into parts, down to quarters. Each quarter will heal a person or creature of any wounds, illness or poison that currently afflicts him. Once split, the apple must be consumed within a 24-hour period, lest it lose its effectiveness entirely.

Once removed from the tree, the apples' power begins to fade. While use during any part of the month following the picking works as stated, after a month off the vine, the apples are rendered powerless, essentially becoming Golden Delicious apples of no particular value.

It is rumored that, should any individual pick and consume all 12 of the Golden Apples of Youth at one time, he would be granted true immortality (although whether this means returning from the dead like a phoenix, healing even lethal wounds or being impervious to harm is a matter of debate). This possibility, however, has never been proven or disproved, and it is the job of Ladon and the nymphs to make certain it never is. Should any individual attempt to do so, the guardians have but to consume a single bite of one of the apples themselves to prevent it. Those who have tried to gain immortality this way and failed have been punished quite severely, as are all who attempt to pilfer Hera's Apples.

columns that mark the boundaries of the terra incognita. Those who try to go beyond the columns find themselves passing out of the garden into the World once more.

Within the terra incognita, the weather is an idyllic, constant springtime, and the garden and its contents are all beautiful. While the garden is lush and green, filled with flowers and grasses, only a single tree grows there: the Tree of Youth. It bears both fruit and blossoms at the same time and is heavily laden with verdant leaves year round. Only a dozen Golden Apples of Youth are borne on the tree's graceful limbs at any one time. Each is replaced within a month by a newly grown one after it is plucked from the tree. Despite their name, the apples are not truly gold, although their skin is a brilliant yellow. Their value is in their power, not in their material worth.

THE HESPERIDES

While Hera has many talents, gardening is not one of them. After creating the terra incognita that would house the garden of the Golden Apples of Youth, she set about looking for someone to tend them for her. Gods would be too likely to try to seize the apples' power for themselves, but mortals were too easily corrupted. Eventually, she settled on a group of nymphs, who—being lesser immortals themselves—would have no need to partake of the apples. She bribed them with her protection against outsiders and a sanctuary against an increasingly hostile World, if they would tend the orchard where the apples were growing. The nymphs gratefully agreed.

LADON, THE HUNDRED HEADED

Fearing that the Hesperides would be unable to resist the temptation of the Golden Apples of Youth, Hera also recruited Ladon, the hundred-headed dragon. Ladon, the runt of a Titan's litter, was constantly in danger of being devoured by not only his parents, but his more powerful siblings as well. The offspring of Earth and Fire, he had no need to sleep and was more than capable of defending himself against most of the World's threats, if not the wrath of his Titan family, so Hera's offer of safety in return for guardianship suited him well.

To Hera's mind, this system of checks and balances—in which Ladon and the Hesperides keep an eye on each other as they both watch the Golden Apples of Youth—works perfectly. The nymphs ensured Ladon did not escape, while Ladon made certain they did not consume the entirety of the sacred apples themselves. Both parties were beholden to her, ensuring her ultimate control of the apples.

OPTIONS

Tales of apples or other fruit that bestow immortality or youth are prevalent throughout the World. For those who would prefer a Northern European bent to this tale, Idun's Apples can be utilized, while those who prefer to add Judeo-Christian elements can transform the Garden of the Hesperides to the Garden of Eden quite easily. Chinese mythology grants similar abilities to peaches.

GARDEN OF THE HESPERIDES ADVENTURE HOOK

In a gambit to gain immortality, a gang of titanspawn plots to steal the Golden Apples of Youth for themselves. They've laid siege to the temple ruins, and have begun sending messages into the garden itself. The nymphs are currently stuck between a rock and a hard place as the titanspawn attempt to woo Ladon to their cause and convince him to abandon his guardianship and cede the Golden Apples of Youth to their side.

HORAI— KINGDOM OF THE YOKAI

Located deep in the primeval forest of Aokigahara just northwest of Mt. Fuji, Horai is the legendary home of the Yokai. Much like the Greek nymphs, these creatures were originally minor godlings that chose to merge with various aspects of creation as suited their natures: some protective and benevolent, some mischievous and others outright malevolent.

As those that were prone to outright malice tended to cause as great a disruption with the workings of the Yokai kingdom as they did with human society, Nurarihyon, ruler of the Yokai, made it clear that they were "welcome" to range further abroad. Those who were benevolent (or at least only mischievous) created for themselves a complex social structure that spanned the entire nation of Japan, but focused on Horai as their capital city. Although many had roles to fulfill elsewhere in the World, tied as they were to certain wells, forests, shrines or seas, Horai was where they returned. In time, the density of wise and experienced Yokai in the area eventually earned the forest itself a reputation as being a place where humans could "soak up" calm wisdom or seek the protection of the Yokai. For generations, the pathways and small shrine clearings through the depths of the forest were considered holy places. Pilgrims from throughout Japan would travel there to meditate and pay their respects to the Yokai.

AOKIGAHARA

Also known as the Sea of Trees, Aokigahara is an ancient forest that has grown up through a thick layer of volcanic rock. It stretches for almost 9,000 acres, only the first kilometer of which is commonly visited by the human travelers who journey there to explore the lava tubes and subterranean caves as well as the primeval flora and fauna. Located just northwest of Mt. Fuji, the interior depths of Aokigahara are nearly impenetrable to human travelers: no roads, pathways or established trails pierce its primordial virtue.

Wild boars make their home in the depths of the Sea of Trees, as do deer, marten, fox and raccoon dog. They are not, however, the most dangerous denizens of the dark wood. Even the least superstitious of local residents will admit they have heard of Aokigahara as a home of monsters such as the tengu and kitsune.

Due in part to the high mineral content of the lava bed in which Aokigahara grows, compasses and other electronic devices rarely function properly there. Strangely, however, although the surface soil is similar throughout the wood, the deeper into the Sea of Trees an explorer probes, the less likely his electronic equipment is to function correctly. While the outer edges have been the subject of many photographs and video documentaries, the inner wilds are almost entirely unrecorded.

HORAI

Due to the depths of the Sea of Trees and its inaccessibility to most humans, Horai needs little else in the way of protection from the eyes of man. Situated in the deepest part of the forest, Horai looks very much like a traditional Japanese village, though the buildings range in size from gargantuan to miniscule. At the center of the village is a beautiful palace that also sports doorways and stairs that range from tiny to gigantic. The main building is suited for roughly human-sized occupants. Sentry towers at each of the four corners of the village stand ready to alert the Yokai of intruders, although such an occurrence is so rare that it's more an occasion for curiosity and surprise than fear.

NURARIHYON AND THE BAD SEED

Nurarihyon is the ruler of the Yokai, although this role seems to be more a product of his confident and self-assured nature than any real power over the rest. He dwells within the palace and serves as a judge, peacemaker and negotiator for the rest of the sometimes fractious Yokai, in return for their respect and nominal servitude. Outsiders, should they appear, are brought into audience before him. How to interact with them is ultimately his decision.

Genteel and sophisticated, Nurarihyon has fulfilled his duty to the rest of the Yokai for centuries, offering sage advice, solid management and strong-but-kind leadership. It's due in no small part to his leadership that the diverse and often contradictory Yokai have been able to maintain a mostly cohesive kingdom for the past millennia, especially after the Amatsukami withdrew into the Overworld, leaving the lesser supernatural beings mostly to fend for themselves.

With the release of the Titans, however, this delicate balance has been upset. Malevolent Yokai (i.e., titanspawn) such as the oni and harionago had formerly been mostly content to terrorize only remote locations where their damage was reduced. Now, they've begun returning to Horai, calling themselves "obakemono" to differentiate themselves from their more passive kin and demanding larger territories near human towns and cities. When Nurarihyon stressed the danger of such plans, not only to the obakemono themselves, but to the entirety of the Yokai, the malevolent factions of the Yokai became belligerent and descended upon Horai en masse, effectively holding the kinder-natured Yokai, including Nurarihyon, hostage in their own homes.

SIEGE

While the malevolent Yokai are fewer in number than their more benevolent kin, they are infinitely better suited to war, both in nature and form. Taking Horai by siege was a simple matter for them. The entirety of the Yokai population who were not obakemono have retreated into the Horai palace, where their collective strength is concentrated solely upon keeping the obakemono out.

This focus of Yokai attention, however, has had unexpected results outside of Horai. Yokai who were once responsible for maintaining the purity of wells, ponds and lakes throughout the nation have retreated to the palace at Horai to lend their support in the siege, leaving their former sanctuaries vulnerable to predation by titanspawn. Similarly, coastline areas that were once protected from storms by Yokai have found themselves buffeted as never before, and house and forest fires have plagued areas once protected but now left defenseless.

Perhaps the most striking change has been in the Aokigahara itself. What was once a benevolent wilderness has now turned dark and menacing as the Yokai guardians withdraw and their place is taken by the malevolent obakemono.

OPTIONS

Much like the plethora of Celtic fae or Native American animal spirits, the Yokai include a broad range of creatures ranging from benevolent to truly wicked. Storytellers who wish to emphasize the kinder nature of the Yokai may substitute other titanspawn for the malicious Yokai. Those who would like to play up the spirits' darker side may populate Horai with other denizens, including but not limited to the benevolent spirits of humans who have lingered to share their wisdom with their descendents. While this removes the "civil war" nature of the setting, it might better suit the way a Storyteller would like to portray the Yokai.

HORAI ADVENTURE HOOK

International news services have picked up a story based in Aokigahara, where evidence of a rash of suicides has been found in what had traditionally been a place of peace and refuge. Investigations report that more than 70 individual suicide sites have been located in the hundreds of acres of forest, some several months old, others very recent. Reporters are bandying around the words "suicide cult" and "organized self-euthanasia," but despite being found in the area, the individuals who have been identified seemed to have nothing in common to connect them to any organization or individual, save for the forest itself.

JOTUNHEIM

When the Titan Ymir was slain by the Gods, his titanspawn servants were devastated by the loss. His absence, and their corresponding weakness in comparison to their fire giant brethren, is in no small part responsible for the climate trends that science blames on global warming, as the glacial might of the frost giants' former glory began to slowly recede toward the North Pole. For centuries, the frost giants have been wary to travel far beyond their sequestered sanctuary in Jotunheim. They struck out at humanity only in very limited areas near each of the myriad mountain entrances to their homeland.

Although they no longer hold the entire northern quarter of the globe in their sway, frost giants are still powerful adversaries. The frost giant nation is now making the most of the Titans' release from the Underworld. Throughout mountain ranges in Europe, the number of devastating avalanches and climbing parties going missing has increased exponentially of late as the giants set out to reclaim where humanity has encroached upon their former territory.

THE UTGARD GATE

Despite the obvious similarity in names, few humans would ever suspect that the Jotunheimen mountain range, a part of the Scandinavian mountains, actually bears access to the legendary home of the giants. This entrance to Jotunheim is the one nearest to the capital, Utgard, and is sequestered deep within the Jotunheimen range. Despite being the largest entrance to the giant's

realm, the Utgard Gate has remained hidden from mortal eyes for centuries, due to being surrounded by treacherous ice sheets to the east and the rough and tumultuous North Sea to the west.

The majority of the Jotunheimen range is part of a National Park, making approach by motor vehicles forbidden. Those who wish to make the journey to the Utgard Gate by land must do so on foot, a journey of several hundred miles from Oslo, the nearest large city. While the Jotunheimen range is not known as a particularly difficult one for hikers and climbers, as the ice fields near the entrance to Jotunheim are crossed, travel becomes more difficult. The giants have mined particularly convenient routes surrounding the Utgard Gate, sapping away at the ice fields until only a thin, but deceivingly pristine, layer remains. Those crossing by land could find themselves tumbled into 50-foot-deep caverns lined with jagged, razor-sharp ice-shards on the sides and floor (see pp. 180 of **Scion: Hero** for details on falling damage.) These caverns are sealed after being created, so as not to allow easy access into Jotunheim proper.

Entry to the gate is also possible by approaching from the west, over the coastline of the North Sea. The coastline in this area is notoriously difficult to scale. Fjords rise up dramatically from the sea to a height of several hundred feet, and attempts to scale the ice cliffs are likely to trigger massive break-offs where tons of ice fall away from the glacier and plummet into the sea. Approach by air from the coastline is also perilous, as the storms that pound the icy cliffs are capable of snatching unwary fliers from the air and tossing them into the ice or the ocean.

If they manage to circumvent the traps and natural hazards of the area, travelers might still be hard pressed to find the gate itself. As they near the gate, the blustery weather turns malevolent. Frozen fog becomes sleet, which transitions to the ever-present blizzard that continuously surrounds the opening to Jotunheim. Located deep within a fault in the glacial fjords along the western shoreline, the Utgard Gate rises up more than 50 feet tall, bordered on each side by a column of clear ice. There is no door. Instead, for anyone without the Legend trait, the columns appear to be set directly into the wall of the fjord. Those with Legend, however, see clearly that Jotunheim lies beyond the gate.

JOTUNHEIM

Just inside the Utgard Gate, a pair of arctic tatzelwurms are chained with massive fetters of ice. They are blind, like their arboreal cousins, hunting only by heat sensing. (See pp. 313 of **Scion: Hero** for details on tatzelwurms. Arctic tatzelwurms are invulnerable to damage from any water- or ice-related Boons, but they take double damage from any heat or flame damage, magic or mundane.) If freed, the tatzelwurms will attempt to escape rather than continue attacking.

Past the tatzelwurms, a 50-foot-tall tunnel extends back into the glacier for a few hundred feet before opening out into Jotunheim proper. Despite being entered through a glacier, Jotunheim itself is not underground. Once through the gate, travelers are no longer entirely in the World, but instead, in a terra incognita that exists between the World and the Overworld.

In Jotunheim, it is always winter. Although weather changes from cold to very, very cold, it never rises above freezing, making it impossible for most plants or animals to survive there. Any animals encountered here, however, should be considered to be nemean in stature, from the stock kept by the giants for food to the giant polar bears and arctic wolves that stalk the arctic wastes. (See p. 312 of **Scion: Hero** for details on nemean creatures.) The terrain is rough, with expanses of snow being punctuated only by jagged outcroppings of stony mountain.

UTGARD AND UTGARD—LOKI

The fortress of Utgard rises up from the nearest ice plain, its frosted walls towering above the surrounding terrain. Unlike the Utgard Gate, the fortress itself is securely protected from intrusion. Yet its inhabitants obviously built it to defend against other giant foes, so ample opportunities exist for human-sized travelers to slip inside unchallenged.

For those who prefer a more overt approach, two options exist. Travelers who simply attack the fortress or who challenge those within its walls in a violent manner will find themselves answered in kind. Several score frost giants and the larger jotuns (see p. 270) are present at Utgard at any given time, along with numerous nemean arctic wolves who are the pets, and sometimes children, of the titanspawn giants. Should all the inhabitants of Utgard be destroyed, other frost giants will come from the more remote locations around Jotunheim to repopulate the fortress, as they believe it's the staging point from which they will spread forth into the World when Ragnarök begins. Careful search of the fortress may reveal maps including locations to other terrae incognitae, as well as one that notes the location of the sunken city of Atlantis under the frozen wasteland of Antarctica.

More diplomatic travelers might find their welcome quite different. Led by Utgard-Loki (see pp. 270-272), the frost giants will open the gates to those who approach in a civil manner (although they have little tolerance for formalities, and overly flowery speech or actions will be mocked mercilessly). Once inside, guests will be offered food and drink that appears to be warm and inviting, but will later be revealed to be only water and ice. They will be challenged to various competitions with their giant hosts, but Utgard-Loki will use his ability to create illusions to make sure that each challenge is impossible to win. Examples might include a challenge to finish a drinking horn of mead, with Utgard-Loki hiding the fact

that the horn is being constantly refilled from the river Iving, or an eating competition where the opponent is actually a captive titanspawn of Fire who burns all that he appears to consume.

While those who lose their tempers during the competitions might find themselves in an all-out brawl with the frost giants, those who uncover Utgard-Loki's tricks or who manage to win the competitions despite the overwhelming odds against them will earn his grudging respect. Those who accept defeat in good grace will also earn his respect. He will be willing to bargain with them (although he will always strive to get the far better end of the deal and is not averse to using trickery to do so). He seeks ways to strengthen his forces, as well as to weaken the forces of those Scions of the Norse pantheon, especially children of Thor, Odin and Heimdall. He may ask them for tangible benefits (weapons, armor, technology or the like) or for information or favors, and is not above sending Scions (especially those of his rivals) to face herculean challenges in exchange for information or much more limited favors. Among the information he has at hand, however, is knowledge of a former island city that has been covered over by ice for centuries.

IVING RIVER

Should travelers venture away from the Utgard Gate, they will find that the realm continues on for hundreds of miles, ending in a raging river that rings Jotunheim entirely. This river, Iving, never freezes, and stretches so far that the opposite shore cannot be seen. Across the river lies shining Asgard, the home of the Norse Gods, but no being who is not a God himself is capable of crossing the expanse. Lesser beings who attempt to

JOTUNHEIM ADVENTURE HOOK

In an area once stable enough to have built a sizeable ski resort industry, avalanches have increased tenfold. Winter storms that once deposited profitable snow pack are now threatening to close down entire mountain towns permanently. Meteorologists are blaming "unusually severe winter storm phenomena," while geologists claim the avalanches are due to widespread global warming. Neither one, however, can explain the increase in Bigfoot or Yeti sightings in the area.

Scions of the Norse pantheon might recognize the touch of the jotun in some of the news photos documenting "storm damage," which includes trees snapped in half and cars thrown through buildings. It doesn't take a child of Thor, however, to recognize the titanspawn influence in a killer storm that news reports say seems to have specifically targeted the inhabited areas of the region.

swim, sail or fly across it can continue forward for hours, days, weeks or years without reaching the far shore. Should they turn back, they will find Jotunheim waiting just a short distance back, no matter how long they have striven for the opposite shore.

OPTIONS

Should it suit the cycle, the Utgard Gate (or a similar entrance to Jotunheim) might be located in another appropriately frozen and remote location. Baffin Island, Canada (known to the Norse as Helluland), the Siachen Glacier in the Himalayas and Cerro Aconcagua ("the Stone Sentinel") in Argentina would all be appropriate locations for gates into Jotunheim's frozen wasteland. For a more US-centric cycle, the depths of the Canadian Rockies or the Pacific Northwest's Cascade Range would also serve.

MAG MELL

According to Irish legend, only the truly glorious can enter into Mag Mell, the "Plain of Joy" ruled by the Sea God Manannán mac Lir. Other legends cede the realm, located on the west coast of Ireland, to Tethra of the Fomorians, a demonic giant. The truth of the matter falls somewhere in between, with Mag Mell being a noted bone of contention between the Tuatha Dé Dannan (the Celtic Pantheon) and the titanspawn Fomorians for centuries.

The heart of the conflict comes from the invaluable nature of the realm of Mag Mell. Although some stories connect it to Annwn, a paradise reached only after death, Mag Mell is of most use to those who are still alive. Within the borders of this mythic realm, no human can die. If a dying man crosses the border into Mag Mell, he will not expire even if his demise was certain moments before that, giving him or his allies time to provide other means of healing. Because of these properties, Mag Mell was at the center of conflict between the Tuatha Dé Dannan and their Fomorian foes for centuries. The Tuatha desired the land for the benefit of their human children and worshipers, and the Fomorian to prevent mankind from using it as a bastion of protection against the chaos and destruction the Titans wished to rain down upon the earth.

When the Titans were imprisoned, it became an equally contested territory between the Gods themselves, as each wished to have at least access, if not control of, the valuable property. Manannán mac Lir, as one of the oldest and most powerful, eventually negotiated himself into control of the realm by agreeing to allow all others to use it as needed. After the Gods withdrew to Tír na nÓg, Mag Mell was left empty for the first time in millennia, save for the occasional human hero who stumbled across its borders.

With the Titans' release, Mag Mell was one of the first locations the Fomorians directed their titanspawn to take control of, a task they quickly accomplished. Manannán mac Lir, however, was reluctant to let such a valuable property go uncontested to his foes and sent his own Scion, a fiery Irish woman named Cordelia Lynch, to reclaim his land.

THE PLAIN OF JOY

The entrance to Mag Mell lies on the western waters of Ireland, accessible only from the top of the Cliffs of Moher. Its legendary ability to only be entered by the truly heroic is due in no small part to this location. In order to reach Mag Mell, an individual must stand precisely in the right location along the edge of the cliff—and then step off. For those who are afraid of heights (or simply don't have a death wish), stepping off the cliff top into apparent thin air hundreds of feet above the pounding surf is its own trial-by-fire. But those truly worthy of entering Mag Mell (i.e., those who have proven their bravery by taking the fateful step) will find themselves stepping out into the Plain of Joy rather than plummeting to their deaths.

As befits a land of health, Mag Mell is rich and green, embodying the epitome of Irish countryside. The rolling hills are verdant and the valleys filled with naturally growing fruits and crystal-clear brooks.

The terra incognita is currently being held by a group of Fomorian titanspawn (as "Generic Giant" on p. 314 of **Scion: Hero**, and led by a "Generic Elder Giant," as on pp. 268-269). While the titanspawn have no doubt of the strategic value of Mag Mell, they aren't human so they don't benefit from its healing properties. Scions, on the other hand, are affected due to their half-human parentage.

Any humans who are knowledgeable enough to have gleaned the location of its entrance and brave (or foolish) enough to step out into the apparent nothingness, may enter Mag Mell and benefit from its effects as well. Unlike many terrae incognitae, there is no required expenditure of Legend points to enter.

Within the borders of Mag Mell, no human can die. Contrary to legend, however, this does not prevent injury, illness or pain, making it a mixed blessing for those who are mortally wounded or ill. The life-preserving powers of Mag Mell can keep someone bound to the mortal coil long enough for their companions to provide other means to heal them. As lethal injuries are often very painful, though, those suffering them might envy the dead while they're waiting. This aspect of the realm is also a mixed blessing for those who seek to recover it from the titanspawn who currently hold it. While their monstrous foes can perish, humans (or demi-humans) might find that tending to the lame, wounded and dying requires a great deal of time and attention that the already dead don't need. They could be forced to tend to those who are on the verge of dying but will not pass, while their enemies have the luxury of continuing to concentrate on the battle at hand rather than their mortally wounded but undying compatriots.

OPTIONS

As a stereotypical utopia, Mag Mell can be replaced by any one of a variety of other mythic locations should it suit the cycle to move it. By replacing the Celtic references with Buddhist ones, Mag Mell can be transformed into Shambala. Changing the flavor to Greek can convert the place to Hyperborea.

MAG MELL ADVENTURE HOOK

When Cordelia's mother came up pregnant not long after her father's fishing ship was lost at sea, the biddies in town wasted no time in counting on their fingers and coming up with a scandal. Her mother fled the small coastal village for Tullamore's more urban environ, as much to escape the constant mocking of the sea as that of the village rumormongers. Cordie grew up there, with little connection to her mother's family or that of the fisherman she was raised to believe was her father. Distance, however, couldn't sever the girl's fascination with the sea, nor could her mother's best efforts. By the time she'd reached secondary school, she'd already decided to study oceanography at Dublin City University. It was there, on a field trip to study the ocean currents off Ireland's eastern coast, that her father made his presence known to her.

Two weeks later, Cordie had withdrawn from university and begun searching for reinforcements to help her in her quest to reclaim Mag Mell from the Fomorians. Although she'd hoped for more guidance from her father, Cordie has been given the identities and locations of several Scions he believes may be able to aid her. She has information capable of leading her to any Scion with Water or Sky Purviews (preferring those with both, such as Scions of Susano-o).

Cordelia will approach the other Scions and try to enlist their aid in freeing Mag Mell, offering access to the realm's protection for themselves and their allies, should they agree. If this is not sufficient motivation, she will sweeten the pot by offering to aid them with one of their own travails. She won't join their Band, though, as her duty is to guard the borders of Mag Mell once the plain has been freed of Fomorian titanspawn.

THE MANU PASSAGE

At the base of the Jilf al Kabir Plateau in southwest Egypt lies the Manu Passage. This tunnel, which ancient Egyptians knew could be used to enter Duat, was used by Atum-Re to circumnavigate the globe and pass through the Underworld so that after setting in the west, the sun might once again rise in the east each morning. In truth, while Atum-Re certainly made use of this magical pathway each night, it was not restricted to his use. Many of the Pesedjet passed by its vigilant guardians in the days and nights before they retreated into the Overworld.

The Manu Passage is not, as legend supposed it, a literal tunnel into the earth that leads to Duat. Instead, it is a supernatural portal that skirts the edge of the Overworld, similar to the Touchstone that connects Stonehenge with its spiritual reproductions. Yet unlike other Touchstones, which link only locations that share an archetypal connection, the Manu Passage can be used to pass between Egypt and any other location in the World in a matter of moments. As well, the Passage is one of a handful of links that can be used by the living to reach the Underworld, although Atum-Re or the souls of the Egyptian dead predominantly used it for this purpose.

THE AKERU

The Akeru (twin lion Gods who guard the entrance to the Manu Passage) are minor members of the Pesedjet, but they were among the last to retreat to the Overworld. These lion Gods take their role as guardians very seriously and were hesitant to abandon their post at the entrance—and for good reason. While the Passage cannot reach the Overworld, there is no other location where those who use it cannot travel. This ability was once limited to use by the Gods and their Scion descendants among Egyptian royalty, or those souls on their way to the Underworld. All others were turned away by the Akeru, even if they had the ability to use the Passage. Yet the withdrawal of the Pesedjet into the Overworld meant that the other Gods were not using the Passage (or bestowing Visitations upon their Scions to give them the power to do so), so it had been centuries since the souls of the departed traveled to Duat (see pp. 144-152). Therefore, the Akeru eventually became convinced that their duty was finished and retreated to join the rest of their pantheon. This left the Temple of Manu vacant, although the Akeru's centuries of hiding their home from mortal eyes left enough ambient power to obscure it from all but the most determined (and supernaturally endowed) explorers.

THE TEMPLE OF MANU

Mount Manu is the legendary location where the sun set each day over ancient Egypt before rising over its counterpart, Mount Bakhu, in the east (the two locations being joined in the Underworld by the River

Urnes). Mount Manu is not found on any maps as such—its exact location was lost centuries ago to all but those tied to the Pesedjet. In truth, the temple itself is at the base of what is now called the Jilf al Kabir Plateau in southwest Egypt. The plateau stands nothing like the majesty of Mount Sinai or other notable peaks of the area, however because the temple itself is set in an oasis that is quite a bit below the surrounding desert, when standing in the temple courtyard, "Mount Manu" seems quite impressive indeed. Most humans will never witness this glory, though, as the ambient protective magic from the Akeru's centuries of diligence shield the oasis and the temple from mortal view.

To those who have the ability to perceive it, the temple itself is a masterpiece of Egyptian architecture. Set into the side of the plateau, its massive open courtyard is lined with tall stone columns. Each stretches more than 60 feet tall and 10 feet in diameter, and has been carved with detailed stories about the many locations the Pesedjet visited using the passageway. Sharp-eyed investigators might be able to pick out details indicative of such exotic locations as Australia, China, the Amazon and the Pacific Northwest. Similar columns grace each side of the archway from the courtyard to the temple proper, these being carved with vivid scenes of massive lions devouring individuals.

In the temple proper, stone columns like those in the courtyard support the towering ceiling, which has been covered with larger-than-life paintings of the major and minor members of the Pesedjet in all their exotic glory. No benches or other furniture graces the temple's hall, and the courtyard archway is the only entrance or exit (other than the Passage itself.)

The Manu Passage lies at the far end of the temple, a gaping tunnel that appears to extend back into the bowels of the mountain itself. No amount of light will penetrate more than a few feet into the Passage, and those who attempt to take torches or flashlights with them, or to use magical forms of illumination, will find that they are summarily extinguished a few steps into the Passage. A massive stone block rests on each side of the Passage's entryway. Each is about 10 feet tall, and 20 wide, and protrudes at least 40 feet into the room, requiring any who wish to enter the Passage to walk between them. A similarly sized stone shelf runs above the Passage itself, traditionally a favorite location from which the Akeru might observe the rest of the temple.

CONTROLLING THE PASSAGE

Opening the Passage to mundane locations is a simple matter for those with the power to do so. While standing between the stone blocks, any individual has only to announce his intended destination anywhere in the World and spend a Legend point. His player must then make a successful Legend roll, difficulty at least 3. If the activation is successful, those standing within the area between the blocks will see a pathway to the previously announced location. They will be able to observe what is happening there. Anyone on the other end of the Passage will not be able to notice any sign of it, however, unless they also possess a Legend score.

MODIFIERS FOR OPENING THE MANU PASSAGE

Certain factors make the Manu Passage easier or more difficult to use.

Condition	Dice Pool Modifier
Activator possesses Psychopomp Boons	+1 per Boon
Activator has used the Passage before	+1
Activator is a Scion of the Pesedjet	+1
Activator has never been to the destination	-4

These factors are cumulative.

Failure to activate the Passage most often results in the passageway remaining dark. (Any exploration thereof will find that it ends with a solid stone wall a few feet back into the tunnel.) No individual may attempt to activate the Passage more than once in a 24-hour period. Further attempts automatically fail, whether the first one was successful or not. If a botch is achieved, however, the results can be disastrous. Possibilities include the passageway opening to an area that appears correct but is not, the entry point holding some danger that is not observable before exiting the Passage or the Passage hiccuping in mid journey and shunting the travelers to another location. Because of the dramatic possibilities, Storytellers are encouraged to assign a difficulty factor to the challenge clandestinely, rather than sharing it with the player who is rolling to activate the passageway, and to merely report the observable results, rather than whether the activation roll itself succeeds or fails.

The Manu Passage is a one-way tunnel. It remains open for 30 seconds, long enough for an entire Band to pass through to its destination, but afterward, it closes and cannot be opened again, save from the temple at Mount Manu. This can make returning to the temple difficult, unless a group has someone capable of opening the Passage remain behind in the temple to open it for their return. Because of the restrictions on using it only once per day, the "anchor" must either not be the person who opened it for the original trip, or must wait 24 hours before opening it again.

OPTIONS

The Manu Passage is the perfect opportunity for Storytellers to showcase their favorite antagonist. Any

of the adversarial Scions or intelligent titanspawn could easily have discovered the location of the Manu Passage, using it to further their individual agendas. Likewise, the temple might have become the abode of others, ranging from ghosts or spectres of the dead who have escaped Duat's torment to mythological creatures from either side of the Overworld War. Sphinxes, benu, serpopards and griffins are all very fitting to have made the temple their home in the Akeru's absence. Considering the nature of the Passage, though, creatures or individuals from any pantheon might have easily taken up residency here.

For a greater challenge, Storytellers can have the Akeru themselves return to the temple, requiring the Scions to negotiate with (or defeat) them in order to use the Passage.

MANU PASSAGE ADVENTURE HOOK

Scions with the Psychopomp Purview suddenly become aware that something significant has changed in the nature of the World. This change is related to travel, and for several weeks, they are given disturbing visions of a pair of dead lions whose crimson blood slowly pools from their muzzles onto a sandstone floor. Likewise, those with the Prophecy Purview receive a single sentence, should they attempt to use their Prophecy power: "The Passage is Open."

OENONE— HOME OF THE MYRMIDONS

When Achilles found himself in need of an army during the siege of Troy, his grandfather, King Aeacus, supplied him with 10,000 warriors, who Achilles found to be almost inhumanly loyal and diligent—and with good reason. Some years before, the vast majority of the population of the island of Oenone was destroyed by a plague as a result of a marital squabble between Zeus and Hera. Hera, jealous of her husband's dalliance with Aeacus's mother, rained disease and all manner of plagues down upon the island hoping to kill her husband's bastard and his nymph mother, Aegina. While she was unsuccessful, the plagues wiped out the island's population almost entirely, killing everyone but Zeus's Scion Aeacus and the Scion's mother. Aeacus, of course, was distraught and begged his father to destroy him as well. Zeus, however, was not about to give Hera the satisfaction (or the political leg-up) of having destroyed one of her husband-rival's most powerful Scions. In an act his son would interpret as pity, Zeus created the Myrmidons from a native colony of ants and charged Aeacus with their care. Aeacus quickly found them to be not only well suited to repopulating his island nation, but also dedicated, if not clever, warriors.

Anticipating that a time might come when he required the use of such a single-minded and loyal army, Zeus decided to protect the Myrmidons from further interference by other Gods. He exerted his power to slip the entire island of Oenone slightly out of the World,

creating a terra incognita that he charged his Scion to protect until such a time as Zeus might have need of it.

OENONE AND AEGINA

Oenone is located just south of Athens in the Saronic Gulf. It is a small island, no more than 10 miles wide in any direction, with a lush and hilly terrain well suited for farming, animal husbandry and other forms of agriculture. Despite being surrounded by the sea on all sides, the natives of Oenone are almost entirely non-seafaring, perhaps because of their unusual heritage. Instead, they have developed a well-organized, although technologically primitive, agrarian society that is entirely self-sufficient. With the single exception of Aegina, who now reigns as benevolent monarch, the people of Oenone are entirely cut off from the rest of the World. Few really believe that there is truth to the legends of a world that exists outside their own.

Human records most often link the Myrmidons with the World island of Aegina (named after the nymph-queen herself). In truth, however, this rumor is carefully crafted to cover up the disappearance of the island of Oenone from known records. Fortunately, it was easier in earlier days, before the advent of modern cartography, to eliminate an island as close to the shores of mainland Greece as Oenone.

MODERN TIMES

Since the demise of Aeacus millennia ago, the nymph Aegina has ruled over this island kingdom, keeping it and the thousands of Myrmidons who live there, safe from outside danger. When the Titans escaped the Underworld, Oenone was one of the first places that Zeus sent word, intending to rally his troops. Yet Aegina might have other plans. Having been ignored by her lover for centuries, and having seen her island's people wiped out because of divine bickering, Aegina is less than entirely willing to come running to do Zeus's bidding.

Despite the lack of contact with the outside World, Aegina has been adamant about the people of Oenone mustering a well-trained militia. Their weapons and armor, which she has brought back from the outside World as "gifts from the Gods," are the most technologically advanced aspects of their society.

OENONE ADVENTURE HOOK

Rumor has it that Aegina has opened bidding on the services of her force of several thousand Myrmidon soldiers. Is this some complicated ploy to glean information about the titanspawn forces, or will the queen truly go to war against her former lover if the price is right?

OPTIONS

Aegina and the Myrmidons provide a unique opportunity for Storytellers. While they can be brought in to aid the Scions in their work in the World, they could just as easily have grown tired of being pawns for the Gods and set out to establish a power bloc for themselves. Whether doing so involves negotiating with the titanspawn or simply holding out as the Switzerland of the Overworld War is entirely in the hands of the Storyteller.

THE PALACE OF AGWE

While the Loa rarely take on physical forms, the in-between nature of the terrae incognitae makes the Palace of Agwe one of the few locations a Loa has made a permanent home in the World. Unlike most of the Loa, Agwe never completely abandoned his home in the World for the Overworld. He is, however, not in residence currently, likely due to the ongoing war with the Titans in the Overworld. With the Titans safely sequestered in the Underworld, he had very little need to worry about security in his palace, as few humans are interested in, or capable of, exploring the dangerous Cayman Trench where the palace is situated.

GETTING THERE

The Palace of Agwe is located in sufficiently deep enough water (18,000+ feet) to have severe adverse pressure issues for those who travel there. Scions with the Water Breathing Boon are immune to these pressures due to their affinity with the element, and those with Epic Stamina are made of sturdier stuff and do not suffer adverse effects until (Epic Stamina x 2,000) feet. Others begin to suffer adverse effects from pressure at between 130 to 250 feet. Scions who wish to dive to the depths of the Palace of Agwe without tremendous Epic Stamina or Water Breathing will require some mechanical or magical means of descending to such a great depth. Otherwise, they'll almost certainly be crushed to death by pressure that would cause even most modern submarines to implode.

Even without the pressure issue, however, the simple fact that the palace is underwater is enough to require some creative preparations for those Scions who wish to visit its halls. Further complicating matters of late are the oceanic dragon titanspawn that have begun tormenting the area and that keep away most human explorers.

The entrance to the Palace itself lies in the northeastern end of the Cayman Trench, a sub-marine trough that runs between Cuba to Jamaica and contains the deepest parts of the Caribbean Sea. While not the deepest part of the trench, the gateway is sufficiently deep to deter casual human explorers. Its entrance is further obscured by an intricate (and at this depth,

impossible) coral formation, which effectively shields it from all but the most determined investigators.

After passing through the coral labyrinth, visitors might find themselves surprised to emerge out of the water into the dry environs of the palace. While Agwe is the master of the sea, unlike one of his wives, La Sirene, he is not a merperson and prefers to breathe air when he is at his leisure.

Agwe's palace is, like other terrae incognitae, not strictly speaking part of either the Overworld or the World. The interior is far bigger than the coral formation in which it is sequestered, possessing dozens of rooms. The walls appear to have been grown out of white and blue coral, and the floors are gleaming-white sand. Each room features at least one window, each seemingly an empty frame. Those brave enough to place their hands through the window opening will find themselves able to reach out into the water beyond, the sea being held back by some invisible force. Each window appears to open up onto a different ocean scene; some are bright and warm with tropical fish in evidence, others night-dark and cold and populated by strange deep-sea fishes. Should an individual attempt to exit the palace through one of the windows, she will find herself in whatever location the window appeared to open onto, be it the Mediterranean Sea or the Mariana Trench.

Each of the rooms is filled with luxurious offerings ranging from bottles of champagne and perfume to dishes piled high with still-steaming food. Silver effigies of rams and roosters adorn the walls, and gleaming nautical medals, sextants and astrolabes line the shelves alongside intricately carved model boats and toy sailing ships. Giant seashells are piled high with gems and pearls, both loose and fashioned into jewelry with ocean themes.

One of the rooms features mahogany-planked walls and brass porthole cases around the windows, giving it the feel of a captain's room aboard a ship. Here, a broad table bears numerous nautical maps piled one atop the other, and more maps are rolled and stored in a wall-sized map-cabinet. Cartography charts of any of the World's oceans can be found here, as well as details on any island, peninsula, shoreline or non-land-locked body of saltwater. Scions might find several of them of interest, including one which bears markings for Aeaea with a notation of "Isle of Dawn—Circe" and another marked simply "Atlantis."

Explorers will find several chambers that feature deep pools ringed in pearl and gem mosaics. Those who enter the pools discover underwater passageways that offer egress to oceans all over the World. The chambers that hold these pools are outfitted to suit a fine lady's needs, although the vanities, jewelry boxes and cosmetic tables are all within arms reach of the pool.

OPTIONS

The Palace of Agwe can easily be situated in any large body of water that suits the cycle, although the Atlantic (especially the Caribbean or near the western coast

SEA HORSE

Should a Scion Band attempt to remove any item from Agwe's Palace, including the map of Atlantis, the action will alert one of Agwe's servants to the Scions' presence. Normally intangible, this guardian spirit will forcibly possess one member of the group, an action that would likely kill an unprepared and unwilling mortal, but instead inflicts three dice of lethal damage upon the servant's unsuspecting horse at the beginning of the possession. For the duration of possession, the "horse" has no control over her body, speech or powers, although she can hear and see what is happening.

Agwe's servant will, needless to say, be quite angered at the group's audacity for stealing his master's property. He is, however, willing to listen to their explanation and to negotiate, should they offer to make reparations. Items that were taken out of a desire to aid the Gods and stop the activities of titanspawn will be more easily forgiven (and require less penance) than those taken out of greed. Appropriate offers might include aid in recovering a Birthright item for Agwe, defeating the titanspawn dragons that have begun terrorizing the Cayman Trench or rescuing one of Agwe's Scions who is being held by a powerful titanspawn in an land-locked area far from the Loa's influence.

Agwe's servant might attempt to bluff the Band into believing he is Agwe himself. The guardian's communication with his master has been cut off as has all communication with the Overworld, however, so he's unable to provide them with more than dire warnings that the situation is bad. He knows no more than they do about why the communication has been severed recently.

Agwe's servant will choose to possess his master's own Scion, should one be present. If not, he will seek out the Scion of La Sirene or Erzulie, his master's two wives. If none are present, he'll seek out the Scions of other of the Loa, followed by those of other sea Gods, or (if no other options are available) a Scion who possesses Boons from the Purview of Water. When negotiations have been completed, Agwe's servant will depart, dealing his horse an additional three dice of lethal damage, but leaving it with the ability to control water (as per the Boon of the same name) for the next 12 hours.

of Africa) are most appropriate. Alternatively, should the Scion Band have no way to travel underwater, the Storyteller should feel free to locate Agwe's headquarters on his ship, *Immamou*, rather than leave the group at a dead end.

PALACE OF AGWE ADVENTURE HOOK

Marine biologists report having filmed a heretofore unknown species of deepwater squid in the depths of the Cayman Trench off the coast of Jamaica. This creature is tentatively being called Architeuthis monstri or "monster squid" both to differentiate it from its smaller "giant" and "colossal" cousins, and due to its unexpected aggressiveness. The beast is estimated to be at least 130 feet long, with tentacles more than a meter in diameter. Anecdotal reports of the monster squid are substantiated by a few seconds of digital footage recorded by the biologists' remote underwater recording explorer sub, shortly before the squid tore the intrusive device to pieces, ending the recording.

PAITITI

While some terrae incognitae have remained hidden from mortal eyes through supernatural methods, others are simply too remote and inaccessible to have been discovered by the World at large. While Paititi, the supernatural center of the Inca Empire, is home to an entire city of indigenous people, the remote jungle and the inhabitants' own beliefs have kept them hidden from outside eyes for more than 800 years.

JEWEL OF THE JUNGLE

The lush rainforest that encompasses the entire eastern half of Peru is considered to be one of the richest and most vital places on Earth. More life teems within a square foot of this verdant jungle than in any other single place on Earth. Yet this same density of life makes travel difficult at best and impossible in many places, save for by the winding waterways that lace through the rainforest's lowlands. Higher up, where the Andes' spurs jut up through mile after mile of rich tropical forest, such convenient routes are few and far between, leaving the vast majority of the Peruvian rainforest unexplored by outsiders.

That is not to say, however, that they're uninhabited. Indigenous villages thrive in this fertile paradise, living much as they have for centuries. While their quality of life would be considered well below poverty level by the

standards of technologically advanced civilizations, the native people don't truly begin to suffer until those same civilizations intrude upon their way of life.

While many of the early cultures native to the region fell to outside invasions centuries ago, this remoteness has allowed at least one to grow for over 800 years without outside interference. Although rumors of Paititi reached European ears more than 500 years ago, and countless expeditions have sought it out, none have been successful at locating the sacred city of the Incas.

THE POWER OF BELIEF

There are advantages and disadvantages to being deities of a culture that has mostly died away. The downsides are many: fewer followers mean less belief, and if the culture dies altogether, the Gods themselves are in danger. Yet the Incan Gods were also able to avoid most of the inter-pantheon politics that struck the majority of other pantheons, due in no small part to being thought too weak to make worthwhile targets by most of the other Gods.

Another advantage the Incan deities have recently discovered is the benefit of having the vast majority of their believers in one location. The population of Paititi is among the least spiritually diverse in any city in the World; everyone there worships the same small pantheon. When the Gods do appear, they are recognized and venerated en masse, with a directness rarely duplicated in the modern World. Likewise, their Scions are educated as to their role from a very early age, often trained by other Scions in a multi-generational manner that is almost unheard of elsewhere.

TIMES OF TURMOIL

Concentrated or not, the Incan pantheon is still comparatively very weak, and its Scions, although well trained, are no stronger. Furthermore, the isolation Paititi has experienced over the past 500 years has left its people at a severe technological disadvantage when confronted by modern adversaries. Unfortunately for the Scions and the general population of the city, titanspawn are not limited to the same forms of investigation that mundane explorers are. Paititi has come to the attention of the Titans, and its people are likely to suffer for it.

OPTIONS

Despite advances in technology, vast stretches of the World's wilderness lie predominantly unexplored and uncharted to this day. Even in regions that are considered settled, inhospitable terrain can leave villages sequestered away from outsiders' eyes (especially if their inhabitants both want to remain hidden and have the aid of the Gods to do so). Thick vegetation, be it forest, jungle or rainforest, can easily hide a city from sight, especially when coupled with difficult-to-navigate terrain. Deserts and oceans can also hide entire cultures, their sheer expanses and lack of landmarks making rediscovering a location difficult even if it is once found. Likewise, extreme topographical features such as mountains, canyons and caves can shield an area from explorers. While Paititi is intrinsically connected to the Incan culture, other early cultures have similar rumors of lost cities filled with riches, knowledge or spiritual power. If it better suits the cycle, Storytellers should feel free to situate a Paititi-like city in the frozen tundra of Siberia, the steppes of Mongolia, the heart of Africa or the burning expanses of the Mojave, and tie it to the specific deities of that area's native culture.

PAITITI'S ADVENTURE HOOK

The Incan culture was reduced to rubble under the rule of the Spanish conquistadors. In recent times, only a single village of under 1,000 inhabitants still laid claim directly to their former glory. After remaining sequestered for hundreds of years, this village has made contact with the outside World once more. Its shamans claim to have a message directly from the Incan Gods about the location of the sacred city of Paititi and have begun taking small parties of individuals out into the depths of the Peruvian forest. Archeologists and anthropologists from throughout the World gather at the site of the Incan base camp, vying for the opportunity to be led to Paititi. There seems to be no rhyme or reason as to why certain individuals are chosen for the journey. Sometimes, an entire group will be chosen; other times, only a single individual is selected. The tribe has made several journeys escorting others to Paititi, but thus far, none of the outsiders have returned to report their findings.

RADEGAST— BATTLEGROUND BENEATH THE MOUNTAIN

In the Carpathian Mountains of what is now the country of Slovakia, a battle is taking place. Although it's being fought in a small terra incognita called Radegast, the effects are being felt in the World, much to the local population's consternation. While the 15,000 residents of nearby Detva blame the dangerous rumblings of nearby Polana Peak on seismic activity, the truth is that one of the stories that most credit only as folklore has come into violent reality.

AN ANCIENT BATTLE

Legends so old as to have been almost forgotten tell of how Svarog, the Slavic God of Fire, fought Zmey, a giant multi-headed dragon, in a battle that caused wanton destruction of

large areas of eastern Europe. This battle caused the ancient mountains there to shake and belch forth smoke and steam, attributes later historians would credit to the presence of early volcanic activity in the Carpathians. In time, however, Svarog captured the dragon and bound him into a terra incognita beneath Polana Peak, effectively ending the battle and the seismic activity. And for hundreds of years, Zmey and Polana Peak have both been quiet. Svarog, retreated to the Overworld with the rest of the Slavic pantheon.

With the release of the Titans, however, Zmey was freed once more. Svarog, unable to turn his attentions from the battle in the Overworld, appointed his Scion, Svarogich, to battle the dragon and chain it once more beneath the mountain. Svarogich, however, is far less powerful than his father, and the battle between Scion and dragon has raged on for months with neither gaining strong advantage over the other. As in days of yore, the combat is powerful enough to shake the foundation of the cavernous terra incognita and send shock waves out into the World. Seismologists have reported incredible amounts of seismic activity in the region around Polana Peak, and towns for miles around are on evacuation alert in case the volcano, once thought long extinct, erupts once more.

RADEGAST

Those who enter the cavernous terra incognita found below Polana Peak might feel they're descending into the depths of Hell. Centuries of holding the dragon Zmey captive have left the dank tunnel walls heavily charred with soot and ash, and the entire cavern is rank with foul fumes. Miles of winding lava tubes crisscross beneath the mountain peak, eventually leading down to the central chamber where Zmey was imprisoned.

The chamber itself has been burned clean of anything organic, with a flame hot enough to turn much of the rock in the area to slag. Crevices in the floor and walls are arranged in claw-like groupings of three or four, as if some giant animal scraped deeply into the stone. More disturbing, however, is the splattering of fresh human-appearing blood that smears the floor of the cavern.

SVAROGICH—SCION OF SVAROG

Apparently the adage "never send a boy to do a man's job" was not a popular one in Slovakia, at least not during Svarog's heyday. While the Fire God might have made quick work of binding Zmey beneath the mountain, his son was not so able. After months of wrestling with the dragon, Svarogich was defeated by his father's legendary foe. The dragon's first act upon winning the battle was to consume Svarogich, tearing the Scion into a few messy bites that it gulped down, armor and all. Its second was to burst free from its mountain prison and retreat into the nearby Slavic woods to lick its wounds and plan its next course of action.

SVAROG'S TONGS

According to legend, Svarog's tongs were smelted from metal from the center of the earth, forged in the heat of dragon's flame and quenched in the blood of a fallen Titan. They appear to be an ancient pair of wolf-jawed blacksmith tongs, the black iron almost impossibly heavy and strong. Along each side are inscribed battle scenes of Svarog and Zmey, crafted in such lifelike detail that, when viewed in firelight, the figures appear to move as the observer watches. The final scene, engraved across the nose of the tongs, shows Svarog forging a spear, using the bound dragon's breath as the source of heat.

Svarog's tongs weigh too much to be used as a weapon by normal humans. They may, however, be wielded by any individual with Epic Strength. When used as a weapon, Svarog's tongs have the following traits: Accuracy +0, Damage +3B, Defense +1, Speed 6. This damage is doubled against Zmey, their intended target. Their primary purpose, however, is to hold the dragon, Zmey, so that it can be bound or slain. For combat purposes, use Nidhogg's traits (see p. 234) for Zmey, with fiery breath replacing the entropic breath of the Norse dragon. In addition, any successful attack against Zmey while using the tongs as a weapon can claim a grapple as a victory condition in place of the bashing damage. If Zmey is successfully grappled, he cannot defend against attacks until he can break free—though his soak still applies. Zmey can try to break free (in a contested roll of [Strength + Brawl]), or he can use his breath weapon, but he cannot use physical attacks. While a Scion has Zmey grappled, she can forgo physical attacks and attempt to wrest him into the chains that formerly bound him. Doing so is an extended action with a difficulty of 1 and a cumulative difficulty of 10 if the grapple has taken place in the central chamber where the chains are located. If the grapple has taken place outside of the chamber, allow the grappling Scion to move the dragon a distance equal to (Strength + Athletics) yards per action until Zmey breaks free or they reach the central chamber.

Scions of Svarog or other Forge Gods (Hephaestus, Völund, Ogoun, Goibhniu, Tlepsh) will recognize that dragon-fire is vital to the creation of some Birthrights, making the binding of Zmey possibly a more preferable choice than killing him. Those with the Prophecy or Magic Purviews might also be granted such insight, especially if they examine the engravings on the tongs.

RADEGAST ADVENTURE HOOK

Seismologists blame the newly active volcano on deep-earth magma rising toward the surface, but the eruption produces an explosion of only rock and smoke as the top of the volcano explodes outward. Scientists are baffled to find no active lava when they explore the deep cavern left exposed by the explosion. This news is overshadowed by something even stranger, however. Local newspapers have just published pictures of what the photographer claims was a dragon he captured pictures of in the area. While the quality is sketchy at best, the photos do seem to show an impossibly large bird or winged lizard in the vicinity of the mountain.

All that remains of Svarogich is a splattering of ichor and the pair of relic blacksmith tongs he dropped during the battle. The tongs may prove useful to those who seek to re-bind Zmey.

OPTIONS

Dormant volcanoes exist in a wide variety of places, and most cultures nearby them have legends explaining the fire and smoke of the mysterious mountains. Stories akin to the tale of Svarog and Zmey's battle can be found throughout the World, allowing this situation to be altered to fit any region where volcanoes are located. For instance, in Papua, New Guinea, seismic activity is blamed on two brothers fighting, which could easily be altered to include rival Scions of the same God or Scion/titanspawn conflict. Likewise, the Klamath tribe in the Pacific Northwest tells of a fight between two chiefs (each one standing on a nearby mountain). The two chiefs threw stones and fire at each other (in a very Scion- or titanspawn-type battle), resulting in two volcanoes.

TOMOANCHAN

Located deep in the heart of a swamp on an island in the middle of a lake that is itself surrounded by steep and forbidding mountains, it would be hard to imagine a location more remote or isolated than the terra incognita of Tomoanchan. Millennia ago, it was here that the first Aztec people came into being, although they couldn't make their homes in the forbidding climate and were sent south to populate the area that would eventually become Mexico City. And it is here that Itzpapalotl, the Obsidian Butterfly, has made her lonely home since they left.

ITZPAPALOTL— THE OBSIDIAN BUTTERFLY

In the earliest days of the Aztec Empire, Itzpapalotl was both respected and feared. In a pantheon of bloodthirsty Gods, She of the Obsidian Wings was noted not for her savagery, but for her inevitability. In time, all things come to Itzpapalotl, just as all things originally came from her. Time, however, often changes things, and as the centuries passed, Itzpapalotl gradually fell out of the spotlight in the Aztec pantheon.

The Obsidian Butterfly rules Tomoanchan, the terra incognita where the first Aztecs were created. While Quetzalcoátl and Cihuacoatl are credited with having actually crafted the first people, it was only by the power of the Itzpapalotl and her realm that the first 13 Aztecs were bestowed with life and the ability to die. Yet although this made her the mother of all Aztecs, it was Quetzalcoátl and Cihuacoatl who received the acclaim and worship, a fact that eventually catapulted them into roles as major players in the Atzlánti pantheon.

Nor was she any more successful with her role as a Goddess of death. While Miclántecuhtli rules the realm of the dead, Itzpapalotl controls when the dead are sent there. With a touch of her knife-bladed wings, she can send even the hardiest of men to their doom. When Itzpapalotl calls, there is no choice but to answer. Unfortunately for her, her power was enough to kill even the other Gods with but a few touches, which meant that she was doomed to live her life alone or else bring about the demise of whoever she showered her attentions upon. For this reason, by the time the rest of the Gods withdrew to the Overworld, she'd been shunned for so long that her absence wasn't even missed.

For millennia, Itzpapalotl has maintained a lonely dominion over Tomoanchan, occasionally exercising her power to create, a phenomenon that makes the area around Tomoanchan one of the most likely for scientists to discover new species. She could not, however, enjoy these species' company for long without risking destroying them, so while distracting, these creations did little to assuage the loneliness of millennia spent predominantly alone.

THE SEDUCTION OF ITZPAPALOTL

Like humanity, Gods are social entities, and the effects of millennia spent in seclusion can be as debilitating to them as it would be to anyone else. Having resigned herself to the fact that there would be no end to her solitary existence, Itzpapalotl was surprised when a beautiful man approached Tomoanchan and asked to be granted entrance to her realm. She welcomed him, eager for the company, although she warned him that her touch brought death. The golden-skinned man just laughed, a gesture that sent beams of sunlight dancing like flames across his wings. Introducing himself as

Simurgh, he set about seducing Tomoanchan's ruler, a deed that was not difficult to achieve considering how lonely she had been. Within hours of the act, however, Simurgh grew pale and began to die, as Itzpapalotl feared he would. She watered the ground of Tomoanchan with her tears, and as he died, she went mad with loss. The soil of Tomoanchan grew red and salty with her blood as she tore at her hair and face with her obsidian-edged wings and eagle-claw nails, but the next morning when she awoke, Simurgh was beside her, whole and healthy.

His ability to be reborn each morning, he told her, was a legacy of his own divine parentage, a birthright that would allow him to stay with her for as long as she respected him and aided him in his work. She, grateful to have at last found someone with whom she could spend her immortal existence, agreed.

SIMURGH

With the Titan's release, their agents in the World have taken many forms. Some are quite monstrous, while some, such as Simurgh, are deceptively attractive. Wholly claimed by the ideal of renewal, Simurgh cannot be killed permanently. While he is as susceptible to illness, injury and age as any human, he wakes young, healthy and whole the morning after he dies, regardless of the nature of his demise. While this might seem to be of limited use to the Titans, it made him perfectly suited to set about seducing one of the minor Gods left in the World over to their side.

THE POWER OF LOVE

Itzpapalotl is no longer sane (if any of the Gods can truly be said to be so). Losing the love she thought she

TAINTED PHOENIX

Simurgh is a Titan-corrupted version of the legendary Persian creature of the same name. In Persian legends, the simurgh was a phoenix-like bird as large as an elephant that was strongly associated with renewal, purification and regeneration. Whether Itzpapalotl's Simurgh willingly serves the Titans or whether his own need for renewal and creation left him vulnerable to their predation is left to the Storyteller to decide.

Either way, Scions who enter Tomoanchan will be faced with an interesting challenge. How do you defeat something that cannot die?

would never have was enough to break what thin threads of sanity her millennia of isolation had left her. She is now utterly obsessed with making certain that Simurgh never leaves her. To this end, she has agreed to utilize her ability to create life to craft titanspawn creatures, which are then released on the World.

She doesn't believe that Simurgh is evil, nor that what she is doing is truly destructive. After all, considering the ills that humanity has impressed upon the earth, can anything she crafts truly be seen as more dangerous? Perhaps more than any other God, Itzpapalotl has always known that death and destruction are the inevitable ends of creation. All things must end, and if the creatures she is creating aid in that process, they are only helping along what is already a foregone conclusion.

OPTIONS

For Storytellers who wish to up the gore factor in their cycle, Itzpapalotl can be creating new life by combining humans with other creatures to bring new titanspawn chimera into being. The unwilling subjects of these creations are being taken from camping and touring expeditions, local villages or from the base camps of those scientists investigating the new animal species that have been springing up in the area.

TOMOANCHAN ADVENTURE HOOK

While scientists have noted that the Sierra Madres are constantly offering them previously undiscovered animal species, nothing has quite prepared them for the creatures that have been found there of late. At first, they believed the monsters to be mutations, perhaps stemming from pollution or even some unreported nuclear testing by the Mexican government. Each new discovery, however, leads even the most jaded biologists further into confusion as they scramble to explain the existence of creatures that simply should not exist.

ATLANTIS

For thousands of years, debate has raged as to the location, description, even the very existence of the legendary city of Atlantis. Although interest has waxed and waned over the centuries, humanity has dedicated thousands of hours, spent millions of dollars and, in some cases, risked—and lost—human lives, all in the pursuit of this mythic location that many claim never even existed. Although the search for the island-nation has occupied lifetimes of research, at no time has the investigation been more vital than the present. What has, in the past, been a matter of curiosity, could now be the key to preventing the end of the World.

HISTORY

Two and a half millennia years ago, Plato wrote of the "Island of Atlas," a place his writings claimed was known to the Ancient Egyptians more than 9,000 years before that. According to Plato, this ancient civilization, located beyond the Pillars of Hercules (now the Straits of Gibraltar), had lived peacefully under the dominion of descendants of Poseidon for millennia until they suddenly were overcome with greed and corruption and were destroyed by the Gods for their weakness. Over the course of one terrible day, the entire island-nation was destroyed. Thousands of soldiers, millions of inhabitants, towers, gates, bridges and palaces all struck from the Earth and plunged into the depths of the sea never to return.

This story, which Plato claims was passed down through his family for multiple generations, is the earliest written reference to the city of Atlantis known to humanity. From the time he set it down in writing, debate about the veracity of this tale has occurred. Some claim that the lack of earlier verification of the story is proof that Plato created it from whole cloth as a parable to illustrate one of his philosophical theories on social and political structure. Others believe that he was alluding to some centuries-old event, a volcanic eruption in the Mediterranean that had, through the unreliable process of oral communication over generations, turned into a mostly fantasy legend. Earlier tales do not exist, say adherents to this theory, because Plato combined several oral traditions about unrelated events and wove them into a single, more complete and more interesting tale. The truth, however, while less palatable to the modern mind, is very simple. At the time of Atlantis's destruction, during the height of the Gods' power in the World, when the Gods erased something, it stayed erased. That any mention of the lost civilization remains at all is a testimony to the astounding record-keeping of the ancient Egyptians in general and the tenacity of one minor Goddess in specific. Without them, and the already rampant inter-pantheon squabbling and prejudices, the story of Atlantis might have been wiped as cleanly from the face of the planet as the civilization itself.

EARLY ATLANTEAN CULTURE

Before the last bout of continental shifting, the land that would one day become Atlantis was tucked securely in the land mass that is now Africa, India and Australia. It was populated with an aggressively intelligent people with a society-wide interest in exploration. This drive led them far from the cradle of humanity, and as the continents drifted, developed their own early culture separate from those of their former-neighbors.

As the eons passed and their culture evolved, this separation became more and more evident. Surrounded by the great southern ocean, they relied heavily upon the sea, which at that time brimmed with all manner of fish, fowl and fur-bearing mammal. While their then-tropical island was lush and expansive, the bounty of the sea provided food, furs, leather, sinew, oil, bone and feathers, leaving them little need for agriculture or animal husbandry. Instead, the vast majority of their time was dedicated to the ocean, and through it, to science. The thick forests of their island provided a bounty of wood for their ships, homes and temples, and the rich soil was full of copper and iron for their tools, nails and, eventually, their astrolabes, sextants and telescopes. This wealth of natural resources, along with a cultural focus on intellectual expansion and exploration, vaulted the people into the forefront of World technological development. Their sea-faring vessels were greatly more advanced than those of other civilizations, which had to divide their time between herding or farming, and their understanding of weather, sea currents, blacksmithing techniques, architecture and construction were well beyond those known in other parts of the World.

Fortunately for those they visited, Atlantis was also a peaceful nation. While its people traveled farther abroad than any other culture of the time, they did so out of

a love of exploration, a need to answer the question of what was beyond the known horizons, rather than out of a drive to conquer other nations. While willing to protect themselves against aggressors, for the most part, they relied on their overwhelming knowledge to maintain contact with other civilized cultures of the time and traded the technological advances they'd developed freely with other nations.

This attitude led, in no small part, to the production of architecture, sculpture and technology in many early nations that seems, to modern historians who are not aware of the Atlantean culture, dramatically incongruent with the native cultures of the time. To those who were familiar with the Atlanteans, however, it was simply one benefit of having contact with such an advanced nation.

RELIGION IN ATLANTIS

Plato claimed that the Atlanteans were ruled by the sons of Poseidon, but he was mistaken. It was an understandable mistake, considering that the Atlantean pantheon was destroyed centuries prior to Plato's time. This destruction left behind no trace of the true Gods the Atlanteans had worshiped for eons (or the false ones who had usurped them).

Atlantis, in truth, was the domain of Badarus, the Atlantean God of the Sea. He fulfilled a benevolent and patriarchal role similar to that of Zeus in the Greek pantheon, albeit with a strong oceanic influence akin to Poseidon. By Plato's time, his identity had been corrupted and merged with that of Oceanus, who the Greeks knew as one of the Titans. The truth, however, was much more complicated.

Badarus, along with his Goddess-wife, Amnis, gave birth to the sibling-lovers Demosia and Kuros, as well as a full complement of other Gods and Goddesses, who married among themselves in a complex hierarchy of deities. Like other Gods, they each took lovers from among the people of their nation, creating Scions. For the most part, these children of the Gods were treated as honored members of society, using their God-given skills for the betterment of the nation. Those who deviated from this culturally supportive norm were shunned by the rest and encouraged to seek out other territories. (This happenstance might have resulted in some mythic tales of supernaturally powered individuals in other parts of the World who seemed to have divine abilities despite lacking apparent ties to known pantheons.)

Like any other group of immortals, the Atlantean pantheon was varied and multifaceted. For the most part, though, the intricacies of their inter-related web of complexity have been lost over the millennia since their destruction. What was not erased outright and lost forever derives almost entirely from a single source, the records of Seshat, the First Scribe (a minor Goddess of the Pesedjet). While her record-keeping is without fault—and it is due to her diligence that any records of the Atlanteans remains at all—any set of information coming from a single source is, by its nature, limited in scope and filtered through a single viewpoint. Because of this, and the adamant opposition from other members of the Pesedjet and the other pantheons to acknowledge the existence of the Atlantean Gods, what is known about this former pantheon is limited and garbled at best, and directly contradictory at worst.

THE ATLANTEAN PANTHEON

While the Atlantean Gods have been missing, presumed dead or corrupted beyond recognition millennia ago, there is power in belief. Should the truth of their former existence come into common knowledge, it is possible (if unlikely) that this belief might renew them, allowing the pantheon to spring into existence once more.

AMNIS

Description: As the wife of Badarus, Amnis was the Goddess of the waters that flowed upon their homeland. Her bounty merged with her husband's at the deltas where Atlantis's rivers met the sea, a popular place for temples to the pair to be built. Reportedly the mother of the rest of the pantheon, Amnis was worshiped at springs and along riverbanks, where Atlantean couples who sought her fertile blessings would consummate their relationships in the hopes of having strong and healthy children. She was also considered to be the patron of cleansing, medical herbs and supernatural healing. Amnis is most often depicted as a short, curvaceous woman, with wide hips, often shown giving birth to a flowing river. Scions of Amnis fulfilled many roles in Atlantean society, from teacher to midwife to healer. While Badarus might have discovered all manner of things abroad, Amnis held the wisdom that kept her people safe, healthy and well fed enough to venture beyond the horizon, and there was quite a good-natured rivalry between the two of them as to who was truly the more wise.

Associated Powers: Epic Charisma, Epic Stamina, Epic Intelligence, Earth, Guardian, Health, Water

Abilities: Empathy, Integrity, Medicine, Presence, Science, Survival

Rivals: Anubis, Hera, Izanami, Set, Zeus

BADARUS

Description: The few depictions that remain of Badarus portray him as a venerable older man who is serpentine or fish-like from the waist down. He's often shown holding a fish or a ship in one hand, and gesturing out and away with the other, as if sending his people out to explore. As the patriarch of the Atlantean pantheon, he encouraged his people—especially his Scions—to discover new territories, to venture beyond the abundant waters that ringed their island nation, seek new shores and learn new lessons. Badarus had an estranged, but apparently happy, marriage to the Atlantean Goddess of the home waters, Amnis.

Scions of Badarus were among the civilization's greatest explorers, visiting the four corners of the map

in a desire to see and experience everything possible. They fancied themselves masters of "what lay beyond the horizon," although unlike some humans, they felt no need to retain or destroy what they had discovered. Simply discovering something was, to Scions of Badarus, its own form of triumph.

Associated Powers: Epic Intelligence, Epic Stamina, Animal (Sea Snake), Earth, Mystery, Psychopomp, Water

Abilities: Academics, Awareness, Control, Investigation, Science, Survival

Rivals: Kuros; Aphrodite, Ares, Horus, Kalfu, Poseidon

DEMOSIA

Description: Mysterious sister-wife of Kuros, Demosia almost never interacted with Atlantis directly, though she reportedly saw everything that happened in the depths of night or darkness. Hers was the realm of whispers, secret thoughts and clandestine meetings, and what she learned, she shared only with her husband, Kuros. Elaborate temples to Demosia were built in mountaintop clearings, and those who had problems or guilt often would go on pilgrimage to confess them to the ever-listening but never-speaking Scions of this moon Goddess.

Demosia was thought to have an appearance that changed with the face of the moon. At its fullest, she was the most beautiful of Goddesses, but as time progressed, she became horrifically ugly and drew a curtain across the moon's light to prevent anyone from witnessing her change. Under the dark of the moon, her visage was thought to have been terrible enough to strike a man dead should he catch a glimpse of her.

Scions of Demosia were left as babes on the night of a lunar eclipse, given by the Goddess to deserving but barren families to raise. While socially reclusive, Demosia's Scions were often the culture's confidants. Many took vows of silence.

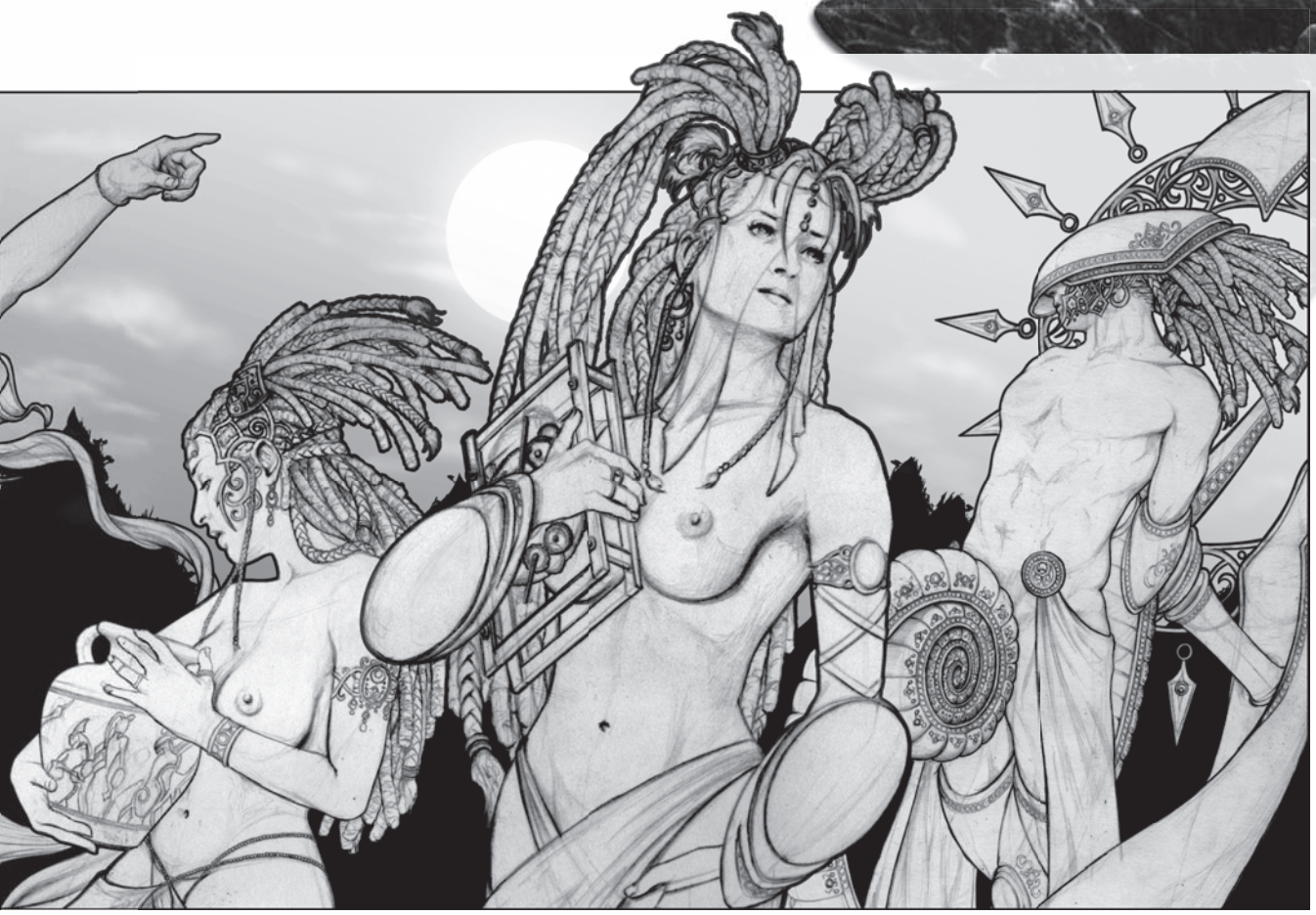
Associated Powers: Epic Appearance, Epic Perception, Epic Wits, Animal (Bat), Darkness, Moon, Magic, Mystery

Abilities: Awareness, Empathy, Integrity, Larceny, Occult, Stealth

Rivals: Aphrodite, Apollo, Atum-Re, Izanagi, Thoth

HESHON

Description: The Atlantean people relied almost entirely upon the bounty of the sea and their lush island-nation to provide for their material needs. They were well aware of their fortune, having visited other cultures where the natural resources were much scarcer, but they also realized that nature can be a harsh mistress. The Goddess Heshon embodied that paradox, symbolizing bounty, luck and plenty as well as the harsh costs thereof. Like the jungle and sea, Heshon was both lush and potentially dangerous, a wild woman untamed even by her husband-mate, Skaft. She was portrayed as an unkempt-but-beautiful woman, lithe and athletic. Her hands and feet were tipped in talons, and she wore no clothing. Instead, her blue-green hair fell around her like a verdant cloak. Those who were lost to the jungle were said to have gone to serve Heshon.



Heshon's Scions were rarely raised in villages. Almost inevitably, they appeared, walking out of the jungle as children or youths, more wild than not, but very self-reliant. They acted as guardians of the village or city they "adopted," sometimes by killing jungle animals that plagued the townsfolk or by coming to the aid of those who had become lost or injured in the wilds or shoreline and were less able to help themselves. Those who came to rely too heavily upon the wild Scions, however, found their presence notably absent when it was most counted to be there.

Associated Powers: Epic Appearance, Epic Dexterity, Epic Strength, Animal (Terror Bird), Chaos, Fertility, Magic

Abilities: Animal Ken, Athletics, Brawl, Melee, Stealth, Survival

Rivals: Athena, Damballa, Geb, Osiris, Quetzalcoátl

KUROS

Description: First son of Badarus and Amnis, Kuros was intellect and investigation embodied. He was reported to be able to travel as quickly as thought itself, and thus kept company with both his mother at home on Atlantis and his father on his travels across the World almost simultaneously. Known as the messenger to the Gods, Kuros was rarely pictured in Atlantean art as he was thought to be invisible, but forceful, like the wind. As such, Atlantean seamen would often sew prayers to Kuros upon the sails of their ships.

Kuros was married to his sister-wife, Demosia, and his ability to travel instantaneously allowed him to travel to visit her in her mysterious night-domain as well. Kuros and Demosia were, much like their parents, opposites that complemented each other well. Each believed that his or her way of gathering information was the best, and no small rivalry existed between Kuros's "share it with all" attitude and his wife's desire to horde secrets for herself.

Scions of Kuros sometimes traveled away from Atlantis, but even those who remained in their homeland constantly sought information and answers.

Associated Powers: Epic Dexterity, Epic Intelligence, Epic Wits, Magic, Psychopomp, Sky

Abilities: Academics, Awareness, Investigation, Occult, Science, Stealth

Rivals: Amaterasu, Damballa, Geb, Odin, Sobek

SKAFT

Description: Unlike the rest of the Atlantean Gods, who were all immortal from birth, legends of Skaft claim he began life as a mortal man. As a child, while his people were still wandering hunters and gatherers, Skaft noticed his mother cut her hand while using a sharp stone to butcher a hare. To protect her skin from the stone's sharp edges, he fashioned a cunning handle for it, creating the first knife. He went on to create all the tools the Atlantean people would need to settle into cities rather than living nomadically: hammers and fishing spears, boats and nets, and the first ovens and kilns. In a short time, the Atlantean people, aided by his inventions, were well on their way to becoming the

advanced nation they would eventually become. Skaft continued to invent not only tools and machines, but the ideas behind all of the great Atlantean sciences: navigation, architecture and making ships. His works were functional and beautiful, defining Atlantean aesthetics for centuries to come. So great was his creativity and his dedication to his people that when he died, the other Gods welcomed him to their side, where he served for eons as the Atlantean God of technology, building, art and creation. Skaft eventually won the love of Heshon, the Goddess of Luck. The two never shared a home for long, however. Skaft preferred the cities and settled areas, while Heshon preferred the wild.

Associated Powers: Epic Charisma, Epic Intelligence, Epic Perception, Epic Wits, Earth, Fire

Abilities: Academics, Art, Craft, Integrity, Investigation, Science

Rivals: Amaterasu, Ares, Horus, Ptah, Zeus

VERSAK

Description: Although Badarus reportedly sired the rest of the Atlantean Gods, Versak was inevitably portrayed as much older than the explorer-God in visage, fulfilling a strange and seemingly contradictory role as both his son and his elder. Versak was the truthspeaker for the Atlantean culture. His Scions were the nation's lawgivers, and to them fell the responsibility for dealing with those deviants who would have used Atlantis's technological superiority for their own gain, or who were unable to abide by the peaceful laws of the island-nation. Versak was also one of the Atlantean Death Gods, although his role in this sphere was limited to those whose fates had caught up with them: criminals, thrill-seekers, those who indulged in unhealthy practices to excess and the like. Unlike many of the Atlantean Gods, Versak was a loner, never linked romantically with other Gods of the pantheon. When he sired Scions, it was not through a tryst, but through imparting his divine word upon the subject of his attention. Those who bore Versak's Scions were often virgins and after giving birth, were frequently given the title "the Mother of Truth" and accorded particular respect among the Atlantean nation for their perceived wisdom having been singled out for Versak's attentions. Some references to Versak in Seshat's scrolls refer to the God as female or neuter.

Associated Powers: Epic Intelligence, Epic Manipulation, Epic Perception, Death, Guardian, Justice

Abilities: Academics, Awareness, Command, Empathy, Integrity, Investigation

Rivals: Anubis, Isis, Hades, Legba, Kalfu

TROUBLE IN PARADISE

For millennia, the Atlantean Gods ruled over, and were worshiped by, the people of Atlantis in relative peace. Their culture and civilization was, without exception, the most advanced and far-reaching in all the World. Had they been a conquering people, the Atlanteans could have literally ruled the Earth. But such was not their interest, so they continued to focus on exploration and the scientific advances that furthered their reaches beyond those thought possible by other nations.

Then something went wrong. This part of the tale, more than any other, is jumbled beyond any hope of knowing for certain what is truth and what is propaganda, where the facts leave off and the morality tale begins. The skeleton of the story remains, however. The Atlanteans ceased worshiping their Gods and, as a nation, began to venerate Titans, putting the entirety of the World in danger. For their crime, they were struck from the Earth.

The details are less clear. Perhaps it began with the Atlantean monarchs, those ten fabled sons of the Sea King who fathered and then ruled the island-nation. Perhaps they were tainted by the touch of the Titans, and used their power and wealth to blot the names of the old Gods from Atlantis, much as many Egyptian dynasties would later do with one generation of God after another. Perhaps the change came instead from within the clergy. If the Titans found a way to cut off the Scions' and priests' contact with the Atlantean Gods, perhaps they were able to take advantage of the vacuum of worship and entrench themselves in Atlantis's supernatural power structure in the Gods' stead.

It is possible that there was an all-out war between the Atlantean Gods and the Titans, and the Gods were destroyed. Perhaps the Atlanteans were little more than the unsuspecting spoils of battle, forced into worshiping their Titanic masters lest they be destroyed themselves. Or maybe the Gods themselves were weakened, tainted and consumed or absorbed by their Titanic foes, leaving the Atlantean people unwittingly worshiping not their age-old pantheon, but a mob of monstrous wolves in sheep's clothing, unknowingly strengthening the unwholesome hybrid Titan-Gods with every prayer and sacrifice.

The truth of how it came to pass may be lost forever in the annals of time, but come to pass it did. Atlantis, the jewel of the sea, the most advanced culture on Earth, turned from her benevolent and peaceful ways and became... something ungodly.

It is unknown whether the change came subtly or suddenly, whether it took weeks or years or decades to come about. But it came. Across the planet, those who had become accustomed to the benevolent visits of the Atlantean people now found themselves being attacked by those who had formerly been their allies. Expeditions became war parties. Trade missions became raids. Commerce became sacking and slavery. Long-anticipated visits turned into bloodbaths, but more horrific was the change in the Atlantean people themselves. As the Titan-taint grew strong within them, their visages warped, reflecting their internal decay. Legends spread across the globe of scale-skinned raiders with eyes and souls as cold as the depths of the sea.

It is difficult to imagine, in this day and age, what the prayers of a wholly dedicated and devout nation such as Atlantis could do to bolster the cause of unthinkable horrors such as the Titans. In time, all that had once been devoted to exploring and building the greatest nation on Earth was now turned to a foul and perverse cause: the creation of a great sickness that would plunge every nation in the World into the maw of Titanic chaos.

STORY HOOKS

The ambiguity of the fate of the Atlantean Gods leaves a variety of story options available for Storytellers to customize to their own cycles. Perhaps the Titans found a way to imprison the pantheon in the same fashion that the Titans were themselves later imprisoned. Perhaps they were consumed by their adversaries and, should the Titans be defeated, may be cut free from their monstrous prison where they have spent eons trapped in the gullets of their foes.

Perhaps the Atlantean Gods have, indeed, been destroyed, but as the memory of their existence returns to the World, their fledgling souls are also re-created. Weakened and without worshipers, these proto-Gods might look to those whose discovery brought them back into being for protection. Or they might seek to make the Scions into their new generation of penitents.

If it suits the cycle for the Atlantean Gods to be returned, rescued, recovered or re-created as information about them comes to light, they may be introduced as an alternative pantheon for players to use in the creation of their Scion characters. Their renewed presence could redeem the long-lost soul of one of the Atlantean elites (see pp. 201-203), or they might bestow Visitation on a character who traces her heritage back to one of the early cultures visited by the pre-taint Atlanteans.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

What followed next was nearly the end of reality altogether. In a macabre ritual of destruction and sacrifice, the Atlanteans released a plague into the atmosphere that spread throughout the World's civilizations. Villages, towns, cities and nations fell sick as the plague swept across the face of the World. No one recovered from the Titan-spawned disease, and wherever it spread, people died in droves. It became quickly obvious that if something was not done, the entire population of the planet would perish.

No explanations remains of why the other pantheons ignored Atlantis's plight until the plague was released. Perhaps the other Gods were unaware of the situation. Maybe they were simply unwilling to get involved until it became obvious that to take no action would ensure the destruction of the entire body of their worshipers as well. (Seshat's records remain diplomatically unwilling to speculate.) But whatever the reason, the other Gods did take action after the plague was released—and a mighty action it was.

In a gesture that had never happened before, and is not likely to again, the Gods of every other pantheon in the Overworld came together and unanimously decided that the island-nation of Atlantis would suffer the same fate it had almost imposed upon the entirety of Creation. The Titans would be imprisoned forever in the Underworld, and those who had been tainted by their touch or had actively sought to bring about the end of the World would be blotted from the face of the planet. While the healers (and dealers of death) set about dealing with the effects of the plague, the rest of the Gods turned their attention to the cold-hearted and systematic annihilation of Atlantis and everything related to it.

There is no force in the history of the universe that can rival that of the War and Death Gods of every pantheon riding down to deliver their wrath upon the heads of the Atlantean evildoers. With every weapon at their avail, the collective force of divine destruction fell upon Atlantis. As long as there remained any remnant of the Atlantean nation, there was a chance that they, or others like them, would free the Titans or attempt to re-create the plague ritual. The other pantheons would take no chances. Every vestige of the nation and its Titan-tainted people felt the wrath of the combined forces of the rest of the World's Gods.

THE SINS OF THE FATHER

Every corner of the globe was searched for the traveling children of Atlantis, and where they were found, the Gods focused the full brunt of their wrath upon the intruders. Atlantean ships were torn from the sea in great waterspouts and shattered with the fury of the Ocean Gods. Atlantean travelers were struck by lightning bolts, their flesh was torn from their frames by sandstorms, they were smothered in avalanches. Hungry animals fell upon them, devouring them—bones and all—until no trace remained.

Working together, the Gods of the skies swept up the contaminant spawned from the Titan's plague. The cold winds of the north and the south's hot desert gales scoured the World, sweeping away the disease that had infected the planet, and leaving the lands clean in their wake. The Gods circled this storm of death southward to the homeland of the Atlantean people, and there it fell like a curtain of destruction upon the island-nation. The air around Atlantis itself grew so thick with death,

disease and the screams of those who had already fallen to the Titan's plague that as many of the island's inhabitants died of suffocation and fear as did from disease. But die they did. Those who did not succumb to the ravages on the island's shore took to the sea in ships and boats, and those who could not sail swam. But the Gods were not so easily eluded. Poseidon and others like him sank every vessel, tearing their carefully crafted hulls apart as if they were paper and sending their crews to their deaths in the turbulent waters, while Artemis and other hunter Gods dealt with those who attempted to swim to safety.

THE END

The people of Atlantis perished by the millions, and their shades, obstructed from entry to the Underworld by the Gods of Death, milled in turmoil about the island. Atlantis, once a paradise, was now more hellish than the depths of the Underworld had ever been. The maddened remnants of the dead tore apart any human who was strong enough to survive the first stages of the plague. By the end of the first day, not a single human soul remained alive upon the island.

Not all the inhabitants of Atlantis were entirely human, however. The Atlantean Titans had their own spawn, "elite" Atlantean citizens twisted into piscine parodies of men, who were more resistant to the ravages of the other pantheons' Gods than the average denizen of Atlantis. Although stripped of their humanity, these titanspawn still tenaciously clung to life as the first day passed. The cruelest of the Gods toyed with them mercilessly throughout that first night, visiting pain and madness upon them rather than simply putting them out of their misery. Many Atlantean elites died in the darkness of that long night, but only the fortunate ones.

By daybreak, the enormity of what they had done dawned upon the Gods like the harsh morning

SESHAT — THE REBEL SCRIBE

The Gods are nothing if not thorough. Their efforts to wipe the Atlantean civilization and its hierarchy of Titans from the face of the planet and all human knowledge were thorough. Where they could, they used force and disaster to scour the planet of all evidence. All traces of Atlantean architecture were burned, broken, drowned or buried until nothing remained of it. In their own countries, where vestiges of the Atlantean's visits could not be destroyed by force without large-scale injury of their own people, they used lies, manipulation and sometimes surgical removal of key figures or items to cloud all traces of the Atlanteans in a shroud of uncertainty and contradiction.

As many cultures of the time relied entirely upon oral tradition, these changes were relatively easy to implement. Remove the witness, and those who have heard his fantastic tale will eventually come to believe it was a fabrication. Even this early, however, the followers of the Pesedjet had begun to use a symbolic written language to record the history of their people. Stories of the Egyptian Pharaohs' encounters with the Atlantean explorers had been engraved upon tombs and the walls of palaces throughout the kingdom, making it difficult to remove every trace of their former presence.

The Pesedjet did its best to make sure these changes were made. It implemented traditions of one ruler destroying the monuments of those he had replaced, or where that was impractical, having his own scribes and craftsmen record his stories of glory over the accomplishments of those who came before him. In this way, eventually, all documentation of the Egyptian's interactions with the Atlanteans was chipped away. Or almost all.

Among the Pesedjet there was a minor Goddess whose entire area of responsibility focused on the written language. Seshat, the First Scribe, had a very narrow and specific domain: record-keeping and the written word. Needless to say, although she understood the other deities' desire to protect the World (and themselves) from the ramifications of their destruction of the Atlantean nation, the wholesale destruction of information was antithetical to her nature. So, while the rest of the Gods of the Pesedjet devoted their energy to hiding all references to the Atlanteans, she set about on her own campaign: hiding the last scrap of proof of the Atlantean civilization from the Pesedjet. As the mistress of the first library and the keeper of the vast majority of the paperwork in existence, it wasn't difficult to hide one small scrap of papyrus among her many other scrolls.

And there it sat, undiscovered, for millennia, until one day long after the Gods had already retreated to the Overworld. An Egyptian priest and Scion of Ptah who was fond of puzzles and challenges uncovered this ancient treasure, penned by the hands of a Goddess. He was so taken by the story that he passed it along to those who would listen, including the man whose family line would one day include the great scholar Plato. And thus, despite the best efforts of the Gods, did the tale of Atlantis not slip entirely from the memories of the World's people.

sunlight. Fearing that, other nations that heard of the wholesale worship of Titans might be tempted to follow in Atlantis's perverse footsteps, the entirety of the World's Gods swore an oath never to speak of Atlantis or its people again. To prevent human explorers from eventually uncovering the remnants of the Atlantean civilization, and to destroy the remaining Atlantean titanspawn, they sunk the island-nation and capped it heavily with ice so thick that no summer would ever melt it. To be certain it remained so, they exerted their collective will upon the island to accelerate its already-southward drift, sending it ever deeper into the icy frozen zone of the Southern Ocean. And there it remained, millions of acres of frozen wasteland visited only by far-ranging wildlife, until the freedom of the Titans brought changes that make Atlantis—or Antarctica as it is now known—once more a threat to the entire World.

ATLANTIS-ANTARCTICA

Because of the harsh and inhospitable nature of the region, human exploration of the land that was once the idyllic paradise of Atlantis and is now known as the forbidding continent of Antarctica, has taken millennia and is still only in its vestigial stages. So complete was the erasure of Atlantis from the face of the Earth and the memory of its people that it was not until the late 1700s that explorers had any evidence whatsoever that the southern continent even existed. Once discovered from a distance, it took more than a century for the first landing parties to reach anything other than its most outlying of islands.

Even now, little more than the surface has been explored. Due to some of the most lethal climate conditions on the planet, although parts of the continent have been claimed by more than a half dozen countries, it remains predominantly unexamined. What few relics of Atlantis's former glory (and fall) still exist remain yet undiscovered.

LAND MASS

Atlantis was, in its heyday, a continental island that rivaled Australia in size. The name Atlantis was used both for the entire ancient nation, which consisted of a continent-sized island, and for the largest city of the nation. By the Gods' wrath, however, Atlantis was shattered by earthquakes and volcanoes, and scoured by tsunamis, leaving it broken into a mass of millions of square miles of smashed ground, buried under thousands of feet of glacial ice and sunk deeply below the sea. What remains above water now is more than five million square miles of stony rock and ice sheets thousands of feet thick. Less than five percent of the continent is free of ice. These areas are predominantly either scattered along the edges of the ice-mass in the form of stony beaches or rocky islands that escaped being covered and connected to the mainland, or thrust up out of the ice fields in the form of mountain peaks or tucked away in "dry valleys." It might be expected that these areas would have revealed the fact that the area had previously been inhabited to those modern explorers who had discovered them. In truth, however, these areas have been buffeted by thousands of years of some of the most extreme weather on the planet, and any relics there that may have escaped the Gods' wrath have certainly been destroyed or swept away in the millennia since Atlantis's destruction.

The landmass of Antarctica is roughly round, with the Antarctica Peninsula jutting out toward South America. Its mass is mostly centered around the South

Pole, although there is a point commonly referred to as the Pole of Inaccessibility that is actually the point furthest away from approach in all directions.

More than seven million cubic miles of ice forms the Antarctic ice sheet, which cover more than 95 percent of Antarctica and contains 90 percent of the World's ice and almost 70 percent of the World's fresh water. Each winter, the sea ice around the edges of the continent begin to expand, adding nearly 40,000 square miles of ice per day, which eventually doubles the size of Antarctica by the end of winter. This additional ice breaks up and forms icebergs, or melts off, each summer, as part of the natural ebb and flow of the continent. It is estimated, however, that were the entirety of the ice cap over Antarctica to melt, it would raise the ocean level across the planet by almost 200 feet. That would be enough to completely submerge Florida, turn the valley in California into an inland sea and swamp the majority of the south and central East Coast of the United States. Across the globe, such a change would destroy the vast majority of seaports and coastal cities of the World, causing untold devastation across the planet.

ICE SHELVES

The ice that caps Antarctica does not merely build upward upon the land-mass like frosting covering a cake. It flows across the stony islands and out into the icy sea beyond, effectively extending the borders of the continent for hundreds of miles out into the ocean. These ice shelves grow much larger in the winter months and melt back in the summer. However, the largest maintain a permanent outcropping of ice that floats, rather than resting on solid ground. These permanent shelves can be hundreds of feet deep, effectively creating a massive ice-roof beneath which thousands of square miles of ocean exist that receive no sunlight or direct contact with open air.

Occasionally these ice shelves crack and break away, resulting in huge flat-topped icebergs. Although most are smaller, modern scientists have witnessed the formation of "table bergs" more than 4,000 square miles in dimension—approximately the size of the island of Jamaica. These floating ice-islands are carried along by the West Wind Drift, eventually being pushed northward into climes warm enough to melt them. In the meantime, however, they can pose quite a threat to travelers in the Southern Ocean, as thousands of tons of floating ice make their unstoppable way into northern waters.

MOUNTAINS

While the ice sheets that cover the continent grow predominantly horizontally, giving much of the outer edges of Antarctica a gently sloping silhouette, that is not to say that the continent is entirely flat. Even in the mostly level central plains, ice mounds and towers jut up through the plateaus in places, like icebergs floating up out of the continent's frozen depths. Some stand in solitude, the only protuberance for hundreds or thousands of miles in any direction. In other places they emerge in a group, like an entire frozen city thrust up through the icy plain.

The outer edges of the continent are more dramatic. Ice-covered mountains extend along the western peninsula. These peaks are related to the South American Andes and have been investigated only lightly by modern explorers. The Transantarctic Mountains extend across the main landmass of Antarctica, rising up tens of thousands of feet into the air. Unlike the western mountain range, many of these peaks are bare stone much of the summer, where their dark rock absorbs the sun's rays and heats the surface enough to

INTERACTING WITH ICE SHELVES

The presence of ice shelves around much of Antarctica makes it difficult to approach by sea in many directions. While relatively solid, they jut up from the water for hundreds of feet, often with sheer (and slippery) cliffs that are problematic to scale. Attempts to clamber up their icy heights should be an extended challenge with a relatively high difficulty (2), a high cumulative difficulty (40) and a roll interval of 15 minutes. Damage for falling can be accrued as usual, although additional information about the dangers of landing in the icy arctic waters can be found in the "BRRRRR!" sidebar (see p. 139).

Many ice shelves are cut back at the water level where the ocean is actually warmer than the air. This undercuts the shelf, sometimes by hundreds of feet, more than far enough to make approach at sea level harrowing. Those who wish to approach an undercut ice shelf must first avoid being crushed between the ice "ceiling" and the rough Antarctic waves. They must then essentially clamber upside-down and fly-like along the almost horizontal, icy outcropping until they can reach the outer edge of the shelf and begin their vertical climb. Choosing such a location increases the difficulty to 3 and the cumulative difficulty to 50.

Even once the ice shelf has been successfully navigated, care must be taken as to behavior on an ice shelf. While most mortal actions are not sufficient to impact the millions of tons of ice along an ice shelf, it is a simple matter for those with Epic Strength or supernatural Boons to exert enough power to send one of these icy islands shuddering away from the mainland.

melt off what little snow may accumulate there. Like the western range, however many of these stony peaks have yet to be scaled by humans in modern times.

VOLCANOES

The frozen wastes of Antarctica are the last place that most would expect to find an active volcano, but the ice-capped continent holds many surprises, not the least of which is Mount Erebus. One of the four volcanoes that form Ross Island near McMurdo Station, Mount Erebus rises more than 15,000 feet out of the Ross Sea and is one of the few volcanoes on Earth with an active lava lake and volcanic steam caves. Mount Erebus was discovered over 150 years ago and is the only active volcano in Antarctica. Yet much of has remained unexplored, both because of the difficulty of reaching certain parts of the mountain, and because of the inherent dangers of exploring an active environment of fire and ice in the harsh environment of Antarctica. Further complicating matters is the fact that the volcano has been continually erupting for the past several years. As many as six times a day, the mountain spews forth bombs of molten lava that explode hundreds of feet in the air and scatter the surrounding area with red-hot stones, some as large as automobiles.

INEVITABILITY

Erebus is a Titan of Darkness. Perhaps it is only coincidence that Antarctica's only active volcano is named after a Titan. After all, how could the 19th century explorers who first discovered the peak they would eventually name Mt. Erebus have known about the location's ties to the Titans? Perhaps it was merely coincidence, as well, that the ship they had come south in was named Erebus as well? Or perhaps not. Fate is a strange and mysterious force. Although it took millennia, it was inevitable that when Atlantis-cum-Antarctica came to light again, the ties to the Titans would be linked to it once again.

Just as inevitable was the resurrection of the idea of Atlantis itself. Just as the other Gods feared, any remaining reference to the Atlantean culture that had escaped destruction meant that the culture, as a whole, would never entirely die. During the same period that explorers had turned their attention to the new continent, European society experienced a renewed interest in the mythic culture of Atlantis, an interest that, although it waxed and waned over decades, would never again fully disappear.

INSIDE MOUNT EREBUS

While the exterior of the volcano is interesting, with more than two vertical miles of ice slopes and 400 square miles of snowpack, what lies below the surface makes Mount Erebus truly unique. The icy blanket covering the mountain is riddled with steam tubes, formed by the volcano's venting of hot air up through the glacial coating. These tunnels range from a few inches in diameter to 10 feet across, but all stretch inward to the heart of the mountain. The interior of these tubes is very smooth, having been formed by the heat of the steam escaping through the ice. Each tunnel slopes down into the mountain, although, in some places, the slant is gradual, and in others, quite precipitous. The tunnel floors can be slick with still-liquid condensed steam running in rivulets over re-frozen water and can easily transform into dangerous slides if not traversed with great care.

It is extremely easy to become lost within the twisting chambers. There is little to differentiate one tunnel from another, and they wind and crisscross as the steam eats away whatever path is easiest through the glacier. Also, because the glacial ice is too thick in most places to permit sunlight to pass through, once a traveler has progressed more than 50 feet into the tunnel, he is immersed in darkness. (See **Scion: Hero**, p. 186, for the effects of low visibility.) Outside light sources can be brought into the tunnels, but they must be carefully monitored. The reflective properties of anything brighter than a flashlight is enhanced to almost blinding levels by the glistening walls, ceiling and floor of the tunnels.

As the tunnels wind deeper into the mountain, the air becomes gradually warmer, and the tunnels grow wider. In places, crossroads may grow into steam chambers of gigantic proportions. Some have developed indentations where the steam condensed into liquid water and the inner chamber has stayed warm enough to prevent it from immediately re-freezing. These glacial pools are more pond than lake and appear to be almost infinitely deep, although this is an optical illusion caused by the pure water lying over glacier, acting as a refracting lens.

Deeper still into the mountain, the air becomes blistering hot, and the glacier is replaced by dark prismatic stone. The tunnels become narrow again, and angular rather than rounded, as the route travels through steam vents rather than the ice tunnels melted from the glacier. Slipping ceases to be a danger, although those traveling in arctic-protective clothing will find it oppressively heavy as the air temperatures climb above 100 degrees Fahrenheit. (Use the chart on p. 184 of **Scion: Hero**, imposing damage to those who do not take off their arctic protective gear as dealing with "blistering heat" at this point.)

As travelers pass deeper into the volcano, the tunnels begin to show signs of stone-crafting. While

they aren't uniform (nor does it look like any attempt has been made to make them conform to a particular dimension) the formerly uneven floor becomes a bit less so. In places where the passage would have narrowed to less than comfortable dimensions, it has been carefully opened up. This continues on until the steam vents end at a central location: the Gateway to the Atlantean underworld.

Gateway to the Underworld

Deep beneath the surface of Mt. Erebus, through miles of ice tunnels and steam vents, is a massive natural chamber formed by a fracture in the volcanic crust. The cavern's steeple ceiling reaches at least 50 feet tall, disappearing into the darkness, and the chamber runs for more than 300 yards. Although the walls are only a double arm-span apart in some places, they stretch 40 feet wide or more in others. The temperature is oppressive, and the stone surfaces are painfully hot to the touch. The air is dank and heavy with sulfur. As the chamber runs deeper into the mountain, a crevice splits the floor where the fault shifted. The crack begins narrowly, but by the far end of the chamber, it spans 15 feet across. Steam rolls up from the bottom of the fault, and a dull glow can be seen far, far below.

The chamber ends in a stone archway that is inscribed with a non-repeating geometric pattern. The arch is easily two arm-spans wide and twice as tall. The archway, however, has been sealed by what was once obviously a solid stone surface. Although parts of the stone blockage are polished as smooth as glass, scrapes mar the surface in many places. The marks are all arranged in groupings of four or five, perhaps a half inch apart, as if fingernails or claws had scraped at the stone long and hard enough to etch their efforts into the stone.

Although it is solid stone and easily a foot thick, the seal across the archway has been broken by the fault, resulting in a large gap at the bottom that rises half the height of the arch. Where the steam from the fault meets the broken seal, it swirls thickly back into the room, pushed away from the archway. Those who draw near find that the air coming through the broken seal is cold and damp, standing in stark contrast to the sweltering climate in the rest of the room.

The archway once ushered the Atlantean dead to the Underworld, as those who are able to decipher the inscriptions upon it will be able to discern. Sealed by the slayers of the Atlantean people, only the earth itself was capable of breaking through the arch. Those who wish to pass through the existing crevice risk falling into the lava-bottomed chasm below. Scrambling through the seal as it stands requires a (Dexterity + Athletics) roll difficulty 5. Alternatively, now that the seal has been broken, it can be cleared by those with Epic Strength or similar means (as destroying a stone wall, see p. 201 of **Scion: Hero**). Doing so allows free passage through to Erebus. (See pp. 214-216 for details on the Atlantean underworld.)

WEATHER

Despite having once been a lush and tropical territory, Atlantis-cum-Antarctica is now the coldest, driest and windiest continent on Earth, and home to the most violent weather found anywhere on the planet. During June and July (the height of winter), not only is there total darkness in the area, but the continent is surrounded by storms and the temperatures drop to levels that are devastating, even for those prepared for sub-arctic weather. Almost all contact with the outside world is cut off, save by email or phone.

TEMPERATURES

The average temperature in winter ranges from -40 to -90 degrees Fahrenheit. Vostok Station, near the South Pole, is the site of the lowest recorded temperature on Earth. In the winter of 1983, temperatures dropped down to -129 degrees Fahrenheit. At these temperatures, even the most stalwart explorer can succumb quickly. While most Scions will persevere due to their epic natures, any humans traveling with them are at great risk for frostbite and hypothermia after very short exposure to such extreme cold.

In summer, however, the weather is relatively calm, and the sun shines constantly. Summer temperatures in Antarctica range from a balmy 5 below zero down to 30 below. The warmest temperature ever recorded there in modern times is 59 degrees Fahrenheit, in the middle of the summer.

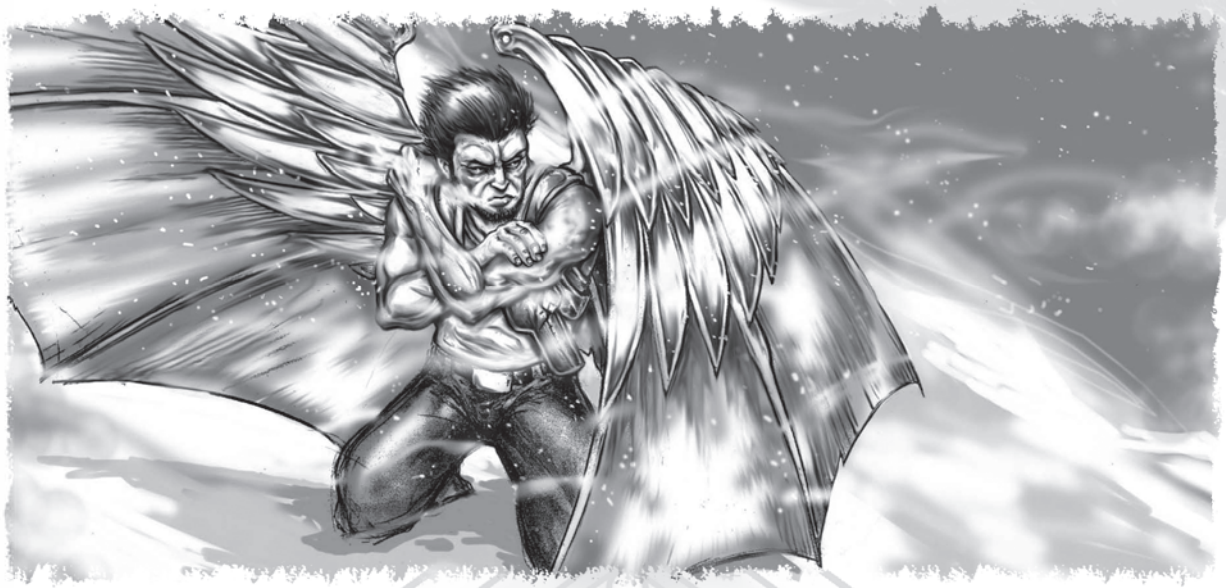
PRECIPITATION

Despite the stereotype of the South Pole being a constant blizzard, the southern continent is actually a frozen desert. While some areas (mostly along the coastlines) get as much as eight inches of snow a year, most receive less than two. In the dry valleys on the continent's interior, there are locations where it has not rained since the day the Gods struck Atlantis from the World's memory.

Blizzards are actually frequent occurrences in Antarctica. They are almost never the result of freshly fallen snow, however. Instead, the already-fallen snow is picked up and blown along the ground by the sometimes gale-force winds. It's not uncommon for these blizzards to reduce visibility to less than three feet, making outdoor travel almost impossible.

Even when the wind is not blowing (which can be a rare occurrence), whiteouts can make travel perilous. Any time overcast skies result in diffused lighting in the region, surface definition and detailing disappears. With a uniformly gray-white sky and snow-covered ground, depth perception can completely fail. The horizon disappears, and it becomes impossible to differentiate snow-covered mountains from clouds, or deep chasms from solid ground. Objects that are only a few feet away might seem to be hundreds of yards distant, and visa versa.

Those caught outside in blizzard or whiteout conditions are at severe penalties to navigate, whether



they're trying to make their way from one building to another, or across the landscape. All challenges based on sight during such conditions should be calculated as if the individual were blind (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 186).

SURROUNDING SEAS

Although looking at a map would lead one to believe that Atlantis is touched by every one of the World's major oceans, in fact, it is the more northern continents that define and separate the Pacific, say, from the Atlantic. In truth, all of the World's oceans are one, more defined internally by the currents that run like rivers through them than they are any artificially imposed lines of demarcation.

The ocean surrounding Antarctica is controlled by a current called the West Wind Drift that moves the waters in that area from the west to the east, creating an oceanic area that is unique to that zone. This Southern Ocean, while not recognized as unilaterally as the Pacific, Indian or Atlantic, is more its own region than it is the southern tips of any of the others.

ANTARCTIC CONVERGENCE

Even more defining of the borders of Atlantean waters than the West Wind Drift is a demarcation that exists some 60 miles off the shore of the continental landmass. This strip of water, known as the Antarctic Convergence, strictly divides the formerly Atlantean waters from those of the rest of the World. Waters outside the Convergence are several degrees warmer than within it, and the chemical compositions of the water on each side of the line of demarcation are distinctly different. Within its boundaries, many life forms that exist in every other ocean are notably absent. No crabs or lobsters, for example, dwell within the Atlantean waters, although they can be found almost everywhere else, fresh or seawater. Many species of Antarctic krill (tiny sea crustaceans), on the other hand, perish further north, but exist by the billions in the convergence, where they feed whales, seals and birds and form a vital part of the Southern Ocean's ecosystem. Scientists are uncertain exactly why this phenomenon happens,

BRRRRR!

The conditions in Antarctica are well below the normal "numbing cold" encountered in other locations on Earth. Exposure to this level of cold can have strange and unexpected effects on the human body. Metal fillings, for example, when exposed repeatedly to such extremes, can shrink, warp and fall out altogether. Of course, frostbite and hypothermia are a constant danger as well. Even with adequate gear and clothing, those who spend time outdoors in the Antarctic region take the normal "numbing cold" damage (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 184). Those who are not adequately outfitted (i.e., not wearing clothing specifically manufactured for arctic conditions) take damage from the cold using the "severe sandstorm" category on the chart to reflect the intensity of the Antarctic weather.

Should exposure to these conditions be coupled with water, either through falling into the ocean, a water-based attack, or sufficient heat being introduced to the area through supernatural means to temporarily melt the surrounding ice and snow into water, the environmental effects should be escalated to the "bonfire" category. This circumstance ignores the previous benefit of appropriate clothing or gear. Once exposed to more than a minimal amount of water, the insulation effects of such items become negligible when combined with Antarctic cold.

although it is clearly just one of the many long-lasting repercussions of the Gods' wrath.

CONVERGENCE CONSEQUENCES

The Antarctic Convergence has supernatural differences from the World around it as well as natural ones. Whether it is a result of Atlantean Titan worship or the rampant destruction visited upon it by the Gods is unknown. Nonetheless, Scions within the borders delineated by the Convergence (sea, land or air) find it more difficult to use any of the gifts bestowed upon them by their divine parents.

Any Scion of a non-Atlantean God who uses a Boon within the Convergence zone must spend an additional point of Legend to do so. Boons that didn't have a Legend cost to activate require the expenditure of a point of Legend to activate (in addition to any other normal activation cost). Also, in order to use the benefits of their Epic Attributes (including Knacks), Scions must spend a point of Legend to access each Attribute's benefits as they are used. This includes gaining the automatic successes, ability increases (such as one's epic lifting capability), bonus dice or Knack abilities.

THE DRAKE PASSAGE

The Drake Passage, named after Sir Francis Drake, is commonly thought to be the single roughest expanse of water in the World. It also marks the shortest point from Antarctica to any other continent, where the southern tip of South America reaches toward the northern edge of the Antarctic Peninsula. The area is almost constantly buffeted by gale-force winds, and hurricane-level conditions happen on average around 20 times a year. Waves frequently reach more than 30 feet in height, and the area is awash with icebergs. The West Wind Drift is forced through its narrowest point here (some 400 miles wide), focusing the 140 million tons of water through with the force of 6,000 Amazon Rivers. Countless ships have been lost in the Drake Passage, and even modern nautical technology has not made the journey a safe one. Ships are frequently stranded on either side of the Passage, due to storms, wind, waves or icebergs.

Those who attempt to navigate the water near the Drake Passage (including that in and around the submerged city) are at severe penalties to their swimming or piloting skills. All challenges related to navigating through this area (by boat or swimming) are at a difficulty of 5. Failure could result in losing control of the ship, while repeated failures could result in the ship going down. Similarly, one failure in swimming could result in being swept off course, while several might result in drowning.

SUBMERGED CITY

Like the entrance to the Underworld hidden in the depths of Mt. Erebus, humanity has yet to discover the remains of the Atlantean capital, which lies just off the coastline of the Antarctic Peninsula and is hidden by a thick layer of ice shelf. Buffeted by the dangers of the Drake Passage, most travelers are too grateful to have completed the journey to explore much further, and the tempestuous conditions have deterred even those who would like to explore further. Because of these factors, the remains of the city of Atlantis have lurked below the surface, covered by water and tons of ice, undiscovered for millennia.

GLORY DAYS

At the height of the Atlantean nation, Atlantis was a city of more than a million people. It relied almost entirely on the sea for its bounty, as well as the abundant natural resources from the island. There was little need for agriculture, as the tropical forests and rich coastal waters provided more than enough, even as the nation's people grew in number. Atlantean architecture was well advanced compared to that of other cultures of the time, utilizing the same mathematical principles that had been developed for nautical exploration. The then-tropical climate allowed the focus of its architecture to be on aesthetics rather than shelter and comfort; a focus that translated both to massive ziggurat pyramid structures and delicate arches and columns as suited the diversity of Atlantean tastes.

Transportation was predominantly by boat rather than cart or pack animal, which led Atlantean architects to create canals and moats between different areas of the city to facilitate the moving of heavy cargo. Later, much as in modern-day Venice, the canals were adopted by those wishing to avoid the hustle and bustle (or exertion) of foot traffic, and elaborate ferries transported travelers from one district to another. Likewise, aqueducts transported fresh water as needed from abundant springs. City waste was swept away with every tide.

Having seen the conditions in other nations, the Atlantean people were well aware of their good fortune and showed their gratitude to their Gods by furthering their efforts in areas that pleased their deities: predominantly scientific discovery and exploration. Clergy were well educated, but so were laymen. Even the youngest children were given training in the basics of science and mathematics, which were more highly prized than scripture, poetry or other written forms of communication. Atlantean art was, for the most part, geometric in form, reflecting the sciences that the Atlanteans found to be the core of life in nature as well as civilized society. Aesthetic attributes were something that was built into everything the Atlanteans made, from clothing to building to ships to tools, and art was seen as a part of a well-crafted item, rather than a separate entity on its own.

Little remains of the glory that was once the Atlantean island-nation. What the Gods did not wipe clean has been broken to bits, buried under millions of tons of ice or swept away by the buffeting waves. Canals were torn asunder. Ports were broken apart and pulled far out to sea. Of the entirety of what was once a sprawling capital, only ruins remain (see pp. 197-198 for details). Spires of stone shoot up from the broken surface of the ocean bottom, standing in towering evidence of the Gods' wrath. Cobbled footpaths, short retaining walls and stone foundations can be found in many places underwater along the shores of Antarctica, although millennia of wear and tear have left much of it indistinguishable from naturally occurring stone formations. Protected in the lee of Ross Island's Hut Point Peninsula, however, a single temple remains mostly whole. This pyramid dedicated to the patriarch and matriarch of the Atlantean pantheon once guarded the headland of the capital city.

TEMPLE OF BADARUS AND AMNIS

The Temple of Badarus and Amnis is a massive ziggurat constructed of stone. It once towered hundreds of feet above the headwaters of the great capital canal but is now submerged well below the turbulent waters of the Southern Ocean. While it formerly guarded the headwaters of the southern tip of the island, it now rests several miles off shore, underneath the lip of a massive ice-shelf. The sinking of the island tilted the once regal temple at almost a 20-degree angle, giving the entire building a haphazard and asymmetrical air. It formerly consisted of a series of 12 giant "steps" that formed a massive tiered platform. A series of wide stone stairs are carved into one face, leading up to the 10th "step," where a broad doorway formerly gave entrance to the shrine proper.

While the rest of the temple was constructed from massive slabs of dark gray stone, the floor of the shrine itself is a beautiful marble mosaic. The decorative geometric patterns have been broken in places around the edges, but the central design remains surprisingly intact. White and green tiles have been laid down in an elaborate labyrinthine pattern more than 30 feet in diameter. The chilly southern waters have prevented algae from growing upon it, and the angle of the temple floor has kept it predominantly clear of debris, allowing the maze-like pattern to stand clear thousands of years after its makers were destroyed.

The megalithic foundation of the temple stands as a testament to the craftsmanship of the Atlantean culture. Even with its underpinnings shifted, it has withstood the majority of the Gods' ire and survived millennia in the most severe climate on the planet. Nature has chipped away at its framework here and there, but it's a man-made disaster that has done it the most severe damage.

THE *HELEN GRACE*

More than 40 years ago, the *Helen Grace*, a stately steel-hulled cargo ship was steaming past Ross Island from the Falkland Islands bound for New Zealand. An unexpected storm, coupled with mechanical difficulties, was more than the ship's inexperienced captain could manage, and the vessel went down off the Hut Point Peninsula. More than 100 crewmen and passengers were lost, along with 8,000 pounds of cargo. As it sank, the ship was turned over by the waves and thrown into the lee of the Peninsula, where it collided with the millennia-old Atlantean temple. The impact knocked the top two "steps" from the massive ziggurat, opening its shrine chamber to the sea, before settling half-atop the stone structure. For more than a century, the big-bellied ship has laid half-over the ancient temple. Although upside down, its cargo-holds are still mostly airtight, resulting in a strange man-made underwater cavern beneath the Ross Sea's surface.

Those who don't have the ability to breathe underwater (or access to artificial breathing equipment) may find it exceedingly difficult to enter. It will take five minutes to swim from the surface to the first air-filled chamber. Exceptional abilities, Boons, Knacks and the like may, of course, cut down on this travel time. For more information on the *Helen Grace*, see pp. 207-210.

THE UNDERWORLD

Even when someone battles hard, there is an equal portion for one who lingers behind, and in the same honor are held both the coward and the brave man; the idle man and he who has done much meet death alike.

—Homer, *The Iliad*

Once, there was unity and order in the lands of the dead. Now, there is only chaos. Once, the dead were safe, and the Titans were in their prison. Now, the prison is shattered, the anchors of the Underworld shorn, and both shades and titanspawn seek the warmth of the living World, bringing fear, violence and destruction where they go.

This is not as it should be. With recent events, the Underworld—long forgotten in the World, save among certain occultists and pagan traditions—has become active once again, interacting with the World in ways it has not since bygone days. Though some cultures still retain the knowledge of how to propitiate their honored dead, these cultures are in the minority in the modern, cynical World. The dead no longer hold a place of honor and respect. They're the monsters in movies, funny costumes in autumn and something in which only cranks and weirdoes are interested.

Now, though, the Titans have broken their prison and sent their spawn through the cracks into the World. Many of the dead, caught up as fallen leaves in a storm-wind, have followed them through. Small hints of this activity have trickled into the public consciousness in tiny ways. Local news stations report on recent hauntings, occultists and priests receive more calls asking for blessings or exorcisms, and those who venerate their dead ancestors have found their dreams of their ancestors becoming more and more frequent.

COSMOLOGY

The Underworld was once an ordered place. The prison of the Titans ran through its center, like a pillar of iron. Dense, ancient and ineffable, the prison was, in many ways, the first site in the Underworld. Crafted by the Gods in primordial eons to lock away their ancient, defeated enemies, the prison of the Titans was sunk deep into the void and left there, ignored.

Eventually, however, once death was introduced among mortals, the Gods began to notice something. As mortals died, that terrible void drew some shade or remembrance of that mortal, like metal filings to a lodestone.

Some pantheons were content to simply let them remain there. Some Gods, however, took an interest in them and found them to be intelligent. Though not complete human personalities, the shades of the dead were certainly not simply spiritual detritus—they had wishes, hopes and dreams often based in their mortal days. They were, undeniably, a result of the human condition. These Gods—who came to be called the psychopomps—argued that if the human experience was worth the attention and interest of the Gods, then their interest should include all aspects of that experience. Even death.

So, the Gods created the places of the Underworld, wrapping them about the prison of the Titans like morning glories clinging to a tall tree. There they clung, throughout the eons. Yet with the turning of the centuries, belief in these places waned, and fewer shades were drawn there.

THE SHATTERING OF THE PRISON

Then, something happened. Whether it was due to a force from within the prison itself, some act of perfidy among the Gods or even some action in the World, the Titans' prison was shattered, blowing huge tears into the veils that separated the Three Worlds. Places already known for their haunted qualities saw a flood of ghosts fleeing the Underworld, and many places that had never seen any kind of supernatural taint became the new homes of shades and mythic creatures fleeing their old existences.

Freed of the innate lure to the prison, more shades escaped, wandering or fleeing through the connections that lie between the Underworld and the World. The old methods that kept shades in the Underworld—many of which relied on the inexorable pull the prison exerted on shades—ceased functioning, and the Death Gods were forced to take quick action to prevent the dead from flooding the World of the living. They were largely successful, but many shades did escape.

Where once each underworld clung to the sides of the Titans' prison, now they are free-floating, metaphysical shards of the broken prison, each adrift in the void, with only their connections to the World preventing them from being lost into that eternal blackness entirely.

THE SHADES OF THE DEAD

Since the breaking of the Titans' prison, the shades of the dead have become terribly restless. Though a few have always resisted the lure of the Underworld, remaining in the World rather than passing on, the souls of the dead have appeared in unheard-of numbers since the Titans' prison was shattered.

The various Underworld realms can no longer reliably contain the restless dead. Each of these domains was designed to take advantage of the attraction the prison had on the souls of mortals, pulling them toward it. Therefor, most underworlds did not need dramatic measures in place to keep their residents there, any more than a magnet needs to take measures to keep iron filings in place. Now, though, each of the underworlds is effectively afloat in the void, with no connection to any other. Their core, the prison of the Titans, is broken and sundered, and exerts no more pull on the dead.

The guardians put in place to keep the occasional strong-willed shade from escaping were inadequate to prevent the flight of hundreds of shades at once. The underworlds are by no means empty—indeed, those souls content to remain there would not dream of escaping—but every single realm in the Underworld suffered its escapes, as the shades of the long-dead fled up the Passages to the lands of the living.

These recently arrived dead are different from the ghosts that manage to remain behind after dead. Naturally occurring ghosts have a place in the rhythm of the World, occupying a niche of memory, regret and the past. They symbolize fear of death, the human question about mortality and the afterlife. These natural shades are familiar with the World around them, having died in their own time frame. These ghosts were either so deeply wrapped up in the psychodramas that made them ghosts in the first place or were aware enough to watch the changes to the World. Additionally, most such ghosts were bound to single places, providing them a connection to that place.

Not so the returned dead. There is no place in the scheme of the living World for those dead who passed into the Underworld and managed to escape. They serve no purpose other than to demonstrate that the workings of the World, the Overworld and the Underworld have gone terribly wrong. Most of these shades died centuries

before the modern era and have returned to a World they do not recognize. The sheer scale of changes that have occurred are incomprehensible to most of those escaped shades, as the dead do not have the adaptability of the living to depend upon in strange situations.

As a result, these ghosts react to the changes in one of two ways: through bewildered grief or terrible fury. They are inconsolable in either instance, the grief or anger driving them to lash out at this strange world that is more incomprehensible, horrible and frightening than anything they encountered in the Underworld. Such ghosts return to a World that doesn't remember them and denies they ever existed. Indeed, it has relegated the underworld they recently inhabited and the very Gods who placed them there after death to quaint legends and folklore.

As such, most of these ghosts take up residence in things that remind them of their old lives, retreating to ancient cemeteries and ruins, or seeking swathes of familiar landscape that have gone relatively unaffected by the passage of time. They lash out at those things that remind them of how strange the World has become with supernatural violence. It is only the innate cynicism of the modern World that keeps people everywhere from becoming aware of this phenomenon. Those who believe in ghosts and the supernatural have an easier time in this day finding evidence of the restless dead. Those who *don't* believe in such phenomena possess an incredible ability to convince themselves that what they've seen is something else entirely.

GHOSTLY VIRTUES

While the description of ghosts in **Scion: Hero** indicates that most such entities do not have Virtues, nearly all of the shades found in the Underworld do. The reason for this is simple. The ghosts one is most likely to find in the World do not have the spiritual or psychological integrity—that is, the Virtues—to pass the trials laid before them by the Underworld. Therefore, the only place such spirits have to go is back to the World, to haunt it in frustration and agony, forever denied the peace of the afterlife.

ENTERING THE UNDERWORLD

There are Underworld Passages all over the World, leading to a variety of specific underworlds. Cultural tombs, mausoleums and expansive gravesites have always served the purpose of creating openings to the Underworld. More than this, though, many natural features are connected, in some way, with the Underworld. Many cultures understood a certain cavern or river to be a Passage into the land of the dead.

Scions understand that these connections are more than simple folklore, however. Those with the appropriate mythic affinities can use these Passages to move bodily into the Underworld—though rarely do

such methods permit exit again. Such means of entering the Underworld are referred to as Passages. Some of the most common types of Passages are described here.

Tombs and Funerary Architecture: Some of the most common Passages into the Underworld are manmade. Every culture creates some funerary custom, but some cultures go so far as to create entire structures and buildings, solely for the use of interring and memorializing the dead. Simply entering such a locale and spending a point of Legend will transport the Scion capable of using the Passage into the appropriate underworld.

Natural Features: Certain natural features were once considered places of the dead, whether because they were used for interring corpses or because they were liminal places between the lands of the living and the lands of the dead. The two most common such features are caverns and bodies of water, particularly rivers. Passing through the natural feature—whether climbing a tree, submerging oneself in the water or walking past the threshold of the cave—and spending a point of Legend will transport a Scion capable of using the Passage into the Underworld.

Rituals: Many funerary rites—particularly those used in ancient cultures—did not serve the purpose that funerals do in the modern World. Ancient rituals were intended to grant the soul of the departed release from the mortal shell and to see it through its passage to the lands of the dead. Such rituals, performed correctly, can provide access to the Underworld. Of course, those Scions who seek to use such rituals are generally only the truly desperate, for it requires treating the body of the Scion in the same way a corpse might normally be treated. Should the one performing a ritual (who cannot be the same person traveling to the Underworld) do so poorly, the Scion could find himself buried alive or trapped in a funereal pyre.

Researching such a ritual requires an extended (Intelligence + Academics) roll. Each roll takes one day of research, is performed at difficulty 3 and must accumulate 10 successes. Then, once the ritual is understood, it must be performed appropriately with a (Charisma + Occult) roll, difficulty 5. The difficulty decreases by one if a Scion of the pantheon from which the ritual originates performs it, and/or if the Scion performing the ritual is either the child of a God with the Psychopomp Purview or possesses Boons from the Psychopomp Purview. If the ritual is performed appropriately, the Scion capable of using the Passage may spend a point of Legend and bodily enter the underworld appropriate to the culture from which the ritual originated.

Times: Certain times of the year resonate strongly with the themes of death and memory, granting passage into the Underworld for those that have passed beyond. The *Dia de los Muertos* is an excellent example of such a date. Those with connections to the Aztec pantheon can feel the pull of Mictlán once the sun sets on the Day of the Dead. All a Scion capable of using that Passage to the Underworld must do is spend a point of Legend.

USING PASSAGES

Only Scions and other creatures who possess a Legend trait may use Passages into the Underworld. Unlike Touchstones, however, simply having the trait is not enough. One seeking to enter the Underworld must have some kind of attunement to that Passage. Those with the proper attunement need only spend a point of Legend to pass beyond the veil and into the places where the dead roam.

Cultural Connection: A Passage will allow the Scion of any God associated with its culture to travel into the Underworld. Therefore, the child of any Egyptian God may use an appropriate pyramid tomb or mastaba. Any Scion of any Aztec God may enter the Underworld during the *Dia de los Muertos*.

Death Connection: The children of Gods possessing the Death Purview are automatically considered attuned to the Underworld Passages of any culture. Likewise, any Scion that has learned Boons of the Death Purview (whether or not her divine parent possesses such) is also considered automatically attuned.

Passenger: Finally, Scions that possess neither a cultural or death-based connection may still use an Underworld Passage, provided they accompany a Scion or other entity who does. Passengers may not pay for their own entry into the Underworld. They must hold hands with the one providing them entry, who must pay a point of Legend for each passenger he takes along. Such passengers must still have at least one dot of the Legend trait, however.

DUAT

AKA: Akert, Amenthes, Tuat

For centuries, Duat has lain fallow. It has been many lifetimes since the last soul came to Duat—the Death Gods of Egypt mandated many requirements in the burial practices of those who desired entry into these dark lands. Even those who revered the Gods of Egypt past the time of the Pesedjet have not found their way here. It is a combination of both belief while alive and

the proper burial rites when dead that grants access to the underworld of the Pesedjet.

Before the shattering of the Titans' prison, Duat was meant as a place where the dead might be tested and purified. Those whose hearts were found to be heavier than the feather of Ma'at were pushed through a gauntlet of horrible tests and rewarded for completing them by being permitted ever closer to Sekhet Hetepet, the paradise city of Osiris. Many souls did not survive these tests and were dispersed into oblivion. Others simply chose to remain at one of the Twelve Gates, the places of reward for accomplishment along the way.

It had been many long years since any new souls had entered Duat. Although all those who worshiped the Pesedjet originally gained entrance into these lands, eventually the culture of the Nile evolved to require specific burial practices and prayers. The conversion of Egypt first to Christianity under the Romans and then to Islam under the Arabs saw to it that no new souls have entered Duat.

Duat is surrounded on all sides by mountains, which ascend upward eternally. The whole of Duat is roughly circular, and its northern and southern reaches are purest desolation. Black sands that consume flesh stretch into the distance, and wailing winds are all that remains of the thousands of unfortunate shades that have wandered to these bleak expanses over the centuries. The eastern and western mountains are the tallest, and they both bear a massive cavern at their bases. A mighty river, deep and black, flows from the western mountain, which is called the Gate of Stars. This river stretches the expanse of Duat, meandering somewhat, but always traveling eastward until it descends with the roar of falling water into the cavern of the eastern mountain, which is called the Gate of Clay.

SUMA, THE LAST SOUL

According to legends spoken among the souls in Duat, the last soul to enter the Egyptian underworld was not buried according to the proper rites. Suma was, however, the last person to *perform* the rites and bury her husband properly. For her dedication to her grandmother's ways in the face of an increasingly Christian world, Anubis gathered up her soul gently and carried her away, striking the men responsible for murdering her with a terrible rotting plague. Although the Pesedjet had already decided to gift her with eternity in Sekhet Hetepet, her heart weighed most favorably against the feather of Ma'at nonetheless. She now serves as a handmaiden in Osiris's palace.

For centuries, Duat had seen no change. Those who were brave enough to venture beyond their current Gate all did so many centuries ago, and they have all either been destroyed in the wastes of Duat or settled for existence at their current Gate. The terrible trials of the Egyptian underworld went unattended, and existence in Duat calcified with no new influx of souls.

Even the Pesedjet began to treat Duat like an ancient relic. Anubis had not been seen in Duat in many centuries, and Osiris seldom left Sekhet Aaru. The Barque of Atum-Re passed down the River Urnes each night, bearing the corpse of the Sun God, sometimes guarded by Set, sometimes defended by Horus, while the great Titan-beast Apep tried to consume the corpse and free itself into the World once more.

THE PEACEFUL RIVER

One night several years ago, the worst happened. The Barque of Atum-Re entered the Underworld through the Rosetjau, the Gate of Stars. Alert Horus watched carefully, ready to strike at Apep the moment he should rise from the black waters to try to consume holy Atum-Re. Through the night he watched, growing more and more anxious—surely the serpent-Titan had some terrible scheme at work, for which he must be ready.

The whole night passed, and Horus saw the Gate of Clay, whereby Atum-Re's Barque enters the sky of the Overworld again, and he turned back to see the river once more. As the Barque passed from Duat, he knew one thing—the River Urnes was empty. Apep was not in it. The Terrible Serpent was loose in the World, his prison broken somehow.

After the Barque of Atum-Re passed into day, however, the river came to life. Terrible serpentine horrors rose from the black waters and did the unthinkable. Slithering from the Urnes, they assaulted the Gates themselves. Every shade they could find was bitten and poisoned, turned into vicious, agonized spectres capable of finding peace only in destruction. Those shades who were not turned into spectres by the serpents or torn to shreds by the spectres were forced to flee the safety of their Gates and travel into the wastes. No more did the Gates provide sanctuary and safety, and the shades of Duat were forced once more into the terrible trials of the Egyptian underworld—not to prove themselves, as in the past, but simply in order to escape death or pollution by Apep's poison.

Osiris himself rode forth to battle these spectres and titanspawn. Mighty serpent-demons rose to fight him, but his rod and scourge slew them with but a touch. They drew his blood, but even this was according to Osiris's will, for those blood-hungry spectres who fed upon the divine ichor were healed of the taint. For a week, the forces of Apep assaulted Sekhet Hetepet, and Osiris threw them back. During the nights, when the Barque of Atum-Re rode the river, the demons disappeared, only to return in the day.

Then a cloak of stars settled over the citadel of Osiris, and Isis walked among the dead. With her magics, she warded the city from the minions of Apep then spoke with Osiris in private. After their council, he appeared to his subjects with tears in his eyes and bade them to continue the fight. Apep was free in the worlds of men and Gods, and he (Osiris) was bound by the Pesedjet to aid them in destroying or imprisoning the Titan once more. Despair filled the city, and there was a great wailing as Isis gathered her cloak about the two of them, and they were gone.

Now, Duat is in a state of terrible turmoil, with no one capable of repairing it. At one end of the River Urnes lies the Hall of Two Truths, kept safe from the minions of Apep by Kebauet, a daughter of Anubis. At the other end is Sekhet Hetepet, the former paradise, now turned into a refugee camp. The people huddle within, wondering when the serpents will break through the wards on its walls.

In between, along the black river, lie the middle 10 of the Twelve Gates. By night, they are desolate places, haunted by ravenous and hate-filled spectres who hiss at the Barque of Atum-Re as it passes through the unwholesomely peaceful waters of the Urnes. By day, the black river roils and the serpent demons emerge, driving the spectres into the deserts and swamps around the gates, seeking renegade shades who may yet survive untainted by Apep.

In this place, there is no rest for the dead.

THE RIVER URNES

Once the waters of the Urnes were thick with angry hippopotami, hungry crocodiles and other river dangers, but all of these threats have fallen beneath the swarms of serpents that now pollute its waters. The black river runs from the Gate of Stars to the Gate of Clay, passing

through the Twelve Gates of Duat and eventually back into the World, where it forms the headwaters of the Nile.

When the sun sets in Egypt, Atum-Re enters the Underworld through the Gate of Stars. Because he is the sun, however, he is but a corpse—helpless and motionless—upon the Barque. In order to protect his corpse from Apep that he might rise from death as the sun once more, the Barque of Atum-Re must have a protector. In the ancient days, Set rode at the front of the Barque, fulfilling his duty as a death-dealer to keep the Titan from achieving victory.

In time, though, something terrible happened. One night Set swallowed a little speck of Apep's venomous spittle and was changed. Rather than simply fierce and determined, Set became wicked, and he crouched in Duat, nestled in the coils of Apep during the day as it whispered blasphemies in his ear. At night, he rose to destroy the Barque of Atum-Re, and would have succeeded were it not for the actions of his nephew Horus, who took his wayward uncle's place defending the Barque. In time, though, Set fought Sobek, who bested him in battle and dragged him from the ebon waters of the Underworld back into the light of the hill Benben, the primordial omphalos of the Pesedjet's creation, which cleansed him of the taint. Now Set and Horus share the responsibility of defending the Barque of Atum-Re.

Those entering Duat generally use one of two methods: through the Gate of Stars or by entering into the river itself (see "Passages to Duat," p. 151). The welcome that awaits new arrivals depends entirely on when they near the river.

By night, with the Barque of Atum-Re upon the river, it is perfectly peaceful. Small snakes swarm through its waters, posing no danger. They are still the servants of Apep, however, and they will speak in hissing whispers to his greater servants, telling them of all those who have come into the river during the night.

By day, the River Urnes swarms with serpents. Great venomous snakes and huge constricting pythons are everywhere, seeking to harm those in the waters. Great serpent demons haunt these waters as well, swimming up from beneath the midnight depths to strike at those unfortunate enough to find themselves in the water during the day.

THE HALL OF TWO TRUTHS

The Hall of Two Truths was once a terribly busy place. All souls escorted to Duat by Anubis were brought here, where Anubis plucked the heart from each shade and weighed it against the white feather of Ma'at. The 42 Gods who judged the worthiness of the souls might be found here, arrayed behind Osiris's throne as he presided. The hearts of those found too vile to balance with the feather of Ma'at were fed to the terrible beast Ammit. Ammit, who possessed the hindquarters of a hippopotamus, the forequarters of a lion and the head of a crocodile, consumed the souls of the damned. Anubis could often be found here, resting between ferrying souls between the World and Duat, tended to by his daughter Kebauet, Goddess of Embalming, who acted as hostess of the Hall.

Now everything has changed. Ammit has not been seen in decades, and Anubis has not visited the Hall in longer than that. Kebauet has challenged the ancient laws of the Pesedjet and given succor to those shades who came to the Hall of Two Truths. By ancient compacts, only the newly dead may enter the Hall, and must do so only to be judged and then sent to their final reward. With the assault of Apep's minions, she threw open the gates of the Hall to those shades fleeing the onslaught. She even goes to battle herself, terrible spear in hand.

As a result of breaking these compacts, however, the Hall has begun to deteriorate. The Hall of Two Truths stands astride the River Urnes, a tower on each bank, with a great hall suspended in the air between them. The first tower, called Ieb-Neter, was the dwelling-place of Anubis, and bore luxurious accommodations for guests.

NIGHT AND DAY

Descriptions of Duat speak of "day and night" throughout this chapter. This does not speak of day and night in Duat, however—Duat is cloaked in eternal, suffocating blackness, save near the Gates. Rather, it speaks of day and night in the World. When it is day in the mortal World over Egypt, the Barque of Atum-Re is absent from the River Urnes. When night prevails over the Nile, the corpse of Atum-Re sails through the Underworld, defended either by Set or Horus.

What little ambient light exists is found around the Sixth and later Gates, for light was a reward to the virtuous. Those souls found wanting must travel through darkness, seeking for that light. When Atum-Re's Barque slips back into the skies of the Overworld, the Sixth Gate and beyond rejoice by providing ample light and heat to those souls who gather around them, even allowing them to cultivate fields of crops in certain places. Darkness comes when the sun dies, and the Barque of Atum-Re slips back into the Underworld, traveling back toward the light. At such times, the ambient illumination around the Sixth and later Gates dims in mourning, barely lighting the area around them.

It is now filled to capacity with the shades of the dead, who mill through its halls, miserable and tormented.

The second tower, called Ma'at-Neter, is where Kebauet dwells. The lower chamber was once a great mummification chamber, where the Gods of the Pesedjet had their Scions properly mummified by the daughter of Anubis herself. It too bears more resemblance to a refugee camp than a proper funereal chamber, littered as it is with the miserable dead.

The central hall that spans the two towers is where all judgment once took place. Although it is still dominated by a large set of gold-and-silver scales, set upon a table made of white sandstone inset with lapis lazuli, the floors here have begun to weaken. Parts of the hall have even fallen into the river below. Kebauet believes that when it deteriorates enough for the Scales of the Dead to fall into the Urnes, that will spell the end for Duat. Already, the decay grows uncomfortably close to the ancient stand.

KEBAUET

AKA: Kebechet, Qébéhout, Qeb-Hwt

Description: Kebauet is the serpent-headed Goddess of Embalming, though she occasionally appears with an ostrich head, reflecting her connection to Ma'at. It is to Kebauet that prayers were uttered as organs were placed within canopic jars in the days of mummification, so that the organs would not decay. Kebauet has visited Earth occasionally, though rarely does she dally with mortals while there. Still, it isn't unheard of that she might have produced a Scion somewhere in the near past, particularly as she insinuated herself in with the recent spate of research groups seeking to rediscover the techniques of Egyptian mummification.

Associated Powers: Epic Intelligence, Epic Manipulation, Animal (Serpent, Ostrich), Death, Heku, Justice

Abilities: Academics, Art, Craft, Fortitude, Medicine, Occult

Rivals: Isis, Osiris; Baron Samedi, Hermes, Susano-o, Thor, Tlazoltéotl

THE TWELVE GATES OF DUAT

Along the River Urnes are set the Twelve Gates of Duat, the places of rest set aside for the shades daring enough to brave the wastes that lead to them. The first of these Gates is the Hall of Two Truths, and the last of them is the Gate that leads into Sekhet Hetepet. Between these points lie 10 other Gates. These Gates are not passages or arches, but pairs of holy *djed* columns, one on each bank of the Urnes. Each Gate provides some new luxury or reward, starting with the Gate to the east of the Hall of Two Truths. Every subsequent gate provides a new reward, as well as all of the rewards of the previous Gates, encouraging those souls who believe they are sufficiently prepared and innately virtuous enough to continue.

The default state of Duat is one of wandering in darkness like that of a half-moon, eternally naked and cold. The wandering shade is hungry and thirsty, and though he might find other souls occasionally, they are all sinister and suspicious, anxious to harm the wanderer and inhibit his journey, lest he inhibit theirs first. Only through reaching the Gates can these terrible conditions be alleviated:

The Gate of Warmth: The Second Gate provides warmth to the body, alleviating the numbness and pain that comes from moving it and breathing.

The Gate of Water: Streams of water pour from the *djed* columns of the Third Gate like fountains. Although the drink here is warm and brackish, it quenches the eternal thirst of Duat. There is warmth here as well.

The Gate of Sustenance: Vines wrap across the height of the Fourth Gate, heavy with fruit. Fig and date plants grow nearby. Strange stones are occasionally unearthed by the blowing winds, which can be broken open to reveal a porridge within. Heat and water is available here too.

The Gate of Rest: The Fifth Gate doesn't appear any different from the earlier ones, but those shades who arrive at it find themselves able to sit and rest their bones or even lean against one of the short, food-bearing trees here to nap. Food, water and heat are all found here.

The Gate of Light: The Sixth Gate lures shades on from afar, for it is the only pinpoint of light in the distance to those who have not reached it. Bright light awaits here, emanating around *djed* columns of gold and lapis lazuli. The dead may rest here, and there is food, water and heat.

The Gate of Adornment: Sheets of rough, thin linen adorn the ground every night at the Seventh Gate as the Barque of Atum-Re passes, gathering like dew. It is well lit and warm, with ample food, water and opportunity to rest.

The Gate of Cleansing: Souls that reach the Eighth Gate are invariably filthy, either from a life lived contrary to Ma'at, or from wading through the wastes of Duat. The natural springs here are hot and calming, washing all filth from the body and clothes of the shades. Clothes, food, water, warmth, light and rest are all found here as well.

The Gate of Reunion: The Ninth Gate provides reunion with friends and loved ones who are at this Gate, and no longer do the shades glare upon one another in suspicion and anticipated violence. Finding old friends and making new ones, the dead enjoy one

another's presence in the warm, well-lit paradise of the Ninth Gate, feasting with one another.

The Gate of Song: At the Tenth Gate, strangers become friends, and the shades of the dead gain the ability to celebrate once more. No longer must they be content to simply exist in one another's presence. They regain the ability to laugh, to dance, to sing and to play music on any of the many instruments that appear in this land. It seems very close to true paradise here.

The Gate of Paradise: Actual dwellings exist around the Eleventh Gate, and it offers finer versions of all the benefits of previous Gates. There are goats and sheep to kill for their meat, the air is brisk and warm, and the light gentle and welcoming. Although there is water aplenty, a massive bronze vessel set into the ground fills up with sweet wine as Atum-Re passes by in his Barque every night, and the celebrations here continue. The only longing comes from the view. Those who come here can see the paradise of Sekhet Hetepet in the distance and know they are without the presence of the Gods, the Pharaohs and the truly virtuous dead. Few dare the wastes past here, content to live a comfortable afterlife, with a longing for what they cannot have.

THE WASTES OF DUAT

The terrible wastes of the land of Duat are meant to punish and test the souls of the dead who attempt to pass through them. In all, the Egyptian underworld is a place of paradise only for those who dwell at the Twelfth Gate. Those souls have earned their otherworldly rest and reward. The rest of Duat is intended to prevent the unworthy from finding their way to Sekhet Hetepet.

For the most part, the lands of Duat are similar to Egypt away from the verdant bounty of the Nile: sometimes hard, dry clay, sometimes drifts of gritty sands. Into these wastes lost souls travel, and the trials that await them there are horrible indeed. Pits of fire dot its expanses, causing the unwary to plunge into conical holes where deep red coals of soul-fire await to sear divine flesh and burn shades into the black soot that hides the coals to begin with. There are no roads, and the thousands of foot-tracks that scar its surface often lead nowhere. Skeletons and desiccated corpses can be found here and there, half-buried by the sands or stones, the only remnants of shades who wandered the expanses and were consumed. Carnivorous creatures—jackals, giant scorpions, massive serpents and nemean crocodiles—roam the lands of Duat, seeking to fill their gullets with the flesh of the dead.

The tests that await those who cross Duat seeking to better their place in the eyes of Ma'at are many. Terrible storms of ice-cold grit, pools of quicksand lined with knife-like flint shards, white sands that radiate a scalding heat and oily wastelands of clay that are impossible to stand in without falling are the order of the day. The variety of torments is staggering, in truth. Poisonous gases rise from filthy swamps toward the venomous serpents hanging from overhead branches. Waters swarm with tiny carnivorous frogs that strip shades' flesh like piranhas. Sounds of breathing and light, mocking whispers echo off the tall walls of terrible canyons of pitch-black darkness. Some shades encounter lands of eternally swirling sandstorms that erode the face and skin, scouring the lungs of those unfortunate enough to need to breathe in it.

Generally speaking, these various dangers inflict environmental damage, with a Damage and Trauma rating that varies depending on where in Duat the victim is. Generally speaking, the outlying lands—those terrible lands that lead nowhere—are relatively benign (Damage 2L/hour, Trauma 2). This is also the rating of the environmental dangers around the Hall of Two Truths.

Yet as souls travel along the Urnes, seeking one Gate after the next, it becomes worse. Both the Damage and the Trauma ratings increase the closer souls come to the Twelfth Gate. These trips last for many long hours. Generally speaking, the trip is based on how wicked and distant from Ma'at the soul in question is. Therefore, the trip for each soul is different, and those who set out for such a trip in the company of others quickly become lost.

Wastelands also have a Virtue rating, consisting of a number, followed by a time increment. The number before the slash indicates what the sum of the traveler's Virtues must be in order to pass through those wastelands in the time increment noted. These Virtues are based on the Egyptian pantheon's Virtues: Conviction, Harmony, Order and Piety. Those who are not virtuous enough to travel through the wastes find their journeys stretching on—for each point that the traveler's Virtues lack, the time increment is added again to the time spent on the journey.

Therefore, a soul traveling from the Fifth Gate to the Sixth Gate finds itself besieged by horrors that inflict up to five levels of lethal damage per hour, with a Trauma difficulty of 4. If his combined Virtues equal 10 or more, he must endure this torment for only five hours. If his Virtues aren't sufficient to permit him passage, he suffers an additional five hours for every point below 10 his Virtue sum totals.

Scions traveling through Duat are not exempt from the effects of Duat's wastelands. They may, however, each spend a point of Legend in order to overcome Duat's power to separate them. They must all endure the testing of the weakest of their number in such a case, though, and many Scions fail to measure up to Duat's standards for one simple reason: They do not necessarily share the Virtues considered important by Ma'at and the Egyptian pantheon.

For instance, a Scion of the Japanese pantheon shares none of the Egyptian Virtues, and so has an effective Virtue total of 0 as far as Duat is concerned. A Scion of the Loa possesses three of the four Virtues, so only the ratings of those three Virtues are added together to determine his effective rating.

Gates	Dmg	Trauma	Virtue	Dur.
1st to 2nd	3L/ hour	2	8	One hour
2nd to 3rd	3L/ hour	3	9	One hour
3rd to 4th	4L/ hour	3	10	One hour
4th to 5th	4L/ hour	4	10	Five hours
5th to 6th	5L/ hour	4	10	Five hours
6th to 7th	5L/ hour	5	12	Five hours
7th to 8th	6L/ hour	5	12	Ten hours
8th to 9th	6L/ hour	6	12	Ten hours
9th to 10th	7L/ hour	6	15	Ten hours
10th to 11th	7L/ hour	7	15	One day
11th to 12th	8L/ hour	7	18	One day

THE SPELLS OF DUAT

Many of the religious and cultural rites of day-to-day life in Egypt were infused with occult lore, meant to teach a variety of spells. Unlike in many places, most of these spells were not intended to be used in life. The living years were simply a time of preparation and learning. Such spells were meant to be put to use once the soul was dead, granting easier passage through the trials of the land of the dead.

In game terms, any visitor passing through Duat who knows the proper incantations from the Egyptians' various funeral books, such as *The Book of Going Forth by Day*, can make his journey somewhat easier. Each success on an (Intelligence + Occult) roll adds one to the effective Virtue total of the traveler. Any successes in excess of this total may be spent to downgrade the severity of the wasteland's Damage, Trauma and Duration by one step on the chart. Therefore, a shade or Scion with a Virtue total of 9, traveling from the Fifth to the Sixth Gate whose player rolls four successes can add one to his character's effective Virtues, so that the trip takes only a single Duration increment. He can then reduce the severity of the wasteland by three steps, down to the Second to Third Gate line. In so doing, he reduces the time he spends in the wastelands, as well as the severity of what he encounters there.

SEKHET HETEPET AND SEKHET AARU

At the easternmost stretches of the Urnes sits Sekhet Hetepet, the paradise afterlife of Egyptian souls. The Twelfth Gate stands between the great city and the rest

of Duat. Standing outside the city, facing its mighty streets, it is called the Gate of Redemption. Standing within the city, facing the wastes of Duat, it is called the Gate of Damnation. Once, those souls who braved the wastes hesitated just outside the Gate, and those within called out to them, urging them to pass through. Their magnanimous welcome turned into a parade that culminated in a meeting with Osiris, who welcomed each new soul to paradise.

But with the shattering of the prison, paradise is lost. Osiris hasn't been seen in the city since the Pesedjet summoned him away. Sekhet Hetepet, once the glorious afterlife reward to the truly virtuous and noble, has been turned into a refugee camp. The shades of brave warriors, Pharaohs and other heroes were forced to take action. The servitors of Apep drove all shades into the wastelands, where few could survive for long. Only the walls of Sekhet Hetepet were warded against the serpent-things, so they made a choice. It is the duty of those who serve Ma'at faithfully to aid the weak and defend the helpless, to provide succor to victims of war, so that's what they decided to do.

A great host of the virtuous dead, spells of protection on their lips, strode forth into the wastelands. Because these souls had proven themselves to Duat, they were not separated, and they managed to do the impossible—they found other souls, and brought them back. This host fought terrible serpent demons, and brought many spirits that would never have made it back on their own. They had to, for there was no sanctuary anywhere else.

It is the nature of Duat to provide only the rewards that the dead deserve. As such, Sekhet Hetepet has begun to erode, becoming filthy and dark, a fitting place of sanctuary for the souls of those without the virtue to find themselves in paradise. The virtuous souls know that their sacrifice is a just one, but it's still a painful one. The broad avenues of Sekhet Hetepet—once clean and white, shining under the light that emanates from the Palace of Osiris—are now filthy and unclean, made fitting for the sinful refugee souls that sleep in its gutters.

The great Palace of Osiris, Sekhet Aaru, is the last bastion of the virtuous. Refugee souls are not permitted within its sacred walls. As a result, it retains some of its luminous nature, providing finer foods and lighting and retaining a cleanliness that the city has long since lost. The Sacred Host, as the leaders of the virtuous dead have come to be called, has claimed this as its headquarters. Careful to prevent refugees from entering, the Host has set mighty khopesh-wielding guards clad all in white at the base of the mighty staircase that leads into it. Of course, the filthy souls below have begun to clamor for access to it. Why should only a few of the souls in the city be granted access to its rich foods and drinks, while others subsist on rotting vegetables, spoilt meat and dirty drinking water just beyond the staircase?

PASSAGES TO DUAT

The people of Egypt were quite concerned with their interactions with the Underworld and made sure to work powerful spells into their cultural architecture and art. As such, there are many ways to enter the Egyptian underworld from the World, if one knows the techniques.

Tombs and Funerary Architecture: Properly created Egyptian sarcophagi and tombs are inscribed with spells and incantations to guide the deceased into the Underworld. A Scion may take advantage of such preparations in order to travel into Duat himself. By lying down in proper funereal pose—the arms crossed over the chest, in the style of Osiris—within a sarcophagus or tomb that has been properly prepared in the ancient styles and spending a point of Legend, the Scion suddenly feels a lurching sensation. As the surface on which he lay drop out from under him, he is plunged into the cold black waters of Urnes, within sight of the Hall of Two Truths.

Unfortunately, the spells are meant to convey the souls of the dead to Duat only once. It takes a tremendous amount of power to use them multiple times in one day. Each use after the first of a given sarcophagus or tomb doubles the Legend cost to make the shift. Therefore, a Scion who flees an opponent by running into a sarcophagus in a museum and dropping into Duat can still be followed if that pursuer is willing to spend two Legend. Anyone after must spend four, and the progression grows ever steeper. This "accumulation" dies back down after 24 hours have passed from the last use of the spells for the Passage.

Additionally, many of the pyramids of the Pharaohs feature what archaeologists have termed "air shafts," strange empty tunnels that rise up at extreme angles. In truth, these shafts pointed to specific parts of the sky, intended to permit the shade of the Pharaoh to enter Duat by traversing the tunnel and climbing toward the Draco or Orion constellations. A Scion can take advantage of such Passages while within a pyramid by simply spending a point of Legend, as though using a sarcophagus. Those who do so emerge from a small tunnel in the side of the Gate of Stars in the west of Duat, next to the River Urnes.

Some Scions have discovered, however, that these Passages are not only found in pyramid tombs. An air-ventilation shaft, a passage through an attic or some other similar opening in a pyramid-shaped building (such as the Louvre Pyramid in Paris, or the Pyramid Arena in Memphis, Tennessee) can provide similar access to Duat—as long as the passageway points to Draco or Orion.

Natural Features: Although there are secret uses for the Manu Passage (see pp. 117-119) known only to the Gods and their Scions, Egyptian lore believed it was used only to enter Duat. Any Scion with Egyptian

parentage or access to Boons of the Death Purview may simply enter the Manu Passage, found in the base of the Jilf al Kabir Plateau in southwest Egypt and spend a point of Legend to emerge from the Gate of Stars in Duat. Likewise, any Scion—regardless of Purview or parentage—who enters the Manu Passage at sunset may spend a point of Legend to enter Duat as well.

Rituals: Only one of the funereal rites bears its power to this day: mummification. Although it's intended for corpses, a few Scions in history have had knowledgeable assistants actually perform the rites of mummification upon them while they yet lived. Because this rite involves the removal of bodily organs and the soaking of the form in natron, any failure from the one performing the ritual results in the death of the Scion. This ritual is handled as noted previously for Underworld Passage rituals, though the point of Legend is paid before the rite begins. It is this expenditure that allows the Scion to survive the process of having his intestines, lungs, liver and stomach removed and placed in canopic jars, being soaked in natron for an hour and then wrapped in funereal bandages prepared by prayers and herbal soaks.

If the ritual is performed properly and the body is laid to rest and placed in a dark area, the Scion awakens—whole and unwounded—in the black river of Duat. The mummy and canopic jars are found to contain only thick mud. If it is performed incorrectly, the Scion is merely dead, perfectly mummified by dint of his last expenditure of Legend.

Times: The ancient Egyptian calendar marked several days when the lines between the World and the Underworld blurred slightly. Among these were the Festival of the Dead (August 4th), a celebration that began at sundown in veneration of the akhu, or blessed ancestors that reside in Sekhet Hetepet. The Mysteries of Osiris's life, death and rebirth were celebrated on August 12th, and the ritual acknowledgement of Anubis's role as psychopomp occurred on September 4th.

Likewise, the three-day festival commemorating Isis seeking and finding the body of Osiris is an excellent time for mortals to step through into Duat. On November 12th, she is believed to seek his corpse, stopping to grieve his loss and seek the help of the creatures of the Nile on November 13th. The last day of the festival, November 14th celebrated her recovery of the pieces. At any time during this three-day period, a knowledgeable Scion (or other creature of Legend) may immerse herself in a river and use it as a Passage to Duat.

February 9th celebrated the trials of those less-than-virtuous souls—referred to as the Unseen—seeking to reach the Twelfth Gate in Duat, while April 4th was the day wherein the 42 Netjeru Judge Gods were venerated for their role in weighing the hearts of the dead. Finally, it was believed that Anubis traveled to every necropolis in Egypt on the night of June 20th, seeking among the ruins there to make sure that he hadn't missed any souls that needed transport to Duat. Being in a graveyard on that night might serve to facilitate passage to Duat for a Scion or other creature of Legend.

DUAT ADVENTURE HOOK

It was believed that ancient curses and blessings adhered to familial lines. A Scion finds himself the subject of a latent curse on his family that has been awakened by a powerful titanspawn. Only his ancestor, now dwelling in Sekhet Hetepet, knows why it was originally laid, and how to break it.

HADES

AKA: Avernus, Dis, Haidou

The underworld of the Greek pantheon is a dark place filled with wailing souls and marked by the eternal sounds of rivers lapping up on muddy shores. The shades of the dead here are wispy things, their extremities fading out of sight and their bodies seeming to be tatterdemalion bits of smoke and gauzy nothingness. The normal dead wail endlessly and piteously, though not loudly. They are barely existent, so they make little sound.

Hades is not kind to normal, average souls. Only those who lived existences of great heroism, creativity and excellence have any kind of solid existence here. Mediocrity is rewarded with more of the same, and the souls of the pathetic dead are themselves hardly worth considering.

THE OUTER SHORES

The River Styx separates Hades from the World, flowing in a circle around the lands of the dead. Across the Styx, however, flows the Phlegethon, a river of dark-colored flame that burns with no fuel. In truth, it is easy to mistake them for being a single river, for no bank separates the Styx and the Phlegethon, which runs parallel to the Styx's dark waters as they surround Hades. Practically speaking, this results in there seeming to be two barriers between the land of men and Hades: a river of water, then a river of fire.

The ferryman Phlegyas poles his barge across the Styx, picking up any soul that wanders the mortal side of that black river, whether they are living or dead. His duty is not to keep any soul in or out of Hades, but merely to provide means by which they might cross.

This circle of water and fire is broken by another two rivers: the Cocytus and the Acheron. Phlegyas travels up the Cocytus, dropping his charges off on the barren lands between the Cocytus, which means "the river of wailing," and the Acheron, which means "the river of woe." This stretch of swampy land is haunted by the souls of the dead, waiting for Charon in his barge. According to burial customs, the dead were buried with either a

coin over each eye, or a coin under the tongue, that they might pay Charon for passage into Hades proper. Those who have no funereal coin are forced to wander the swampy lands that lie between the Cocytus and Acheron for 100 years, wailing their misery for all to hear.

All the rivers in Hades are vast, and the land itself is quite dark. It is impossible to see very far, even through the use of supernatural means. The ferrymen of Hades find their way through the gloom more by knowledge of where they are than by actual sight. Mortals and many Scions become lost quite easily here, and sometimes, lost souls can be found who have gone astray, floating listlessly in the river or wandering nearly blind along a marshy shore.

THE FAR SHORES

Those set onto the swampy shore of the other side of the Acheron are met first with the smell of flowers in the air—the scent of asphodels. The gloom gradually lessens, and the soul finds himself walking the Fields of Asphodel, a vast rolling plain. This plain is covered with blossoming asphodels, and there are many forms that wander its length and breadth. The souls of heroes and Scions might be found here in strong relief, appearing as they did in life, if a bit paler. About them, flitting like moths to a torch, are the souls of the unremarkable dead, those who did not bear up the Virtues of the Dodekatheon. Such souls seem wispy and tattered here, for those lacking in the excellence (the "arete") the Greeks and Romans held in such high esteem are practically non-existent. It is easy to be overawed by the sight of the Field of Asphodel, with the tall, basalt towers of the Palace of Hades in the far distance that one does not notice the stealthy approach of Cerberus.

The terrible Hound of Hades, with its three heads, and a tail and mane made up of writhing serpents, finds all who cross the Acheron. The dead are nudged on toward the Fields of Asphodel. Those who demonstrate any hesitation to continue onward are growled at and prevented—by force, if necessary—from withdrawing back across the Acheron.

The living are warned away with a growl, their passage impeded. Cerberus does not permit the living—not even Scions of the Gods—to pass into the lands of the dead any further. Heroes in past ages have overcome Cerberus, for it is Fated that he shall impede those of living or dead nature, but not the divine. Yet—as is appropriate for the Greeks and Romans—the divine beings must prove themselves through great feats.

The heroes of the past have overcome him in a variety of ways. Where Heracles wrestled him into submission, most of those who needed to pass him found a means of lulling him into sleep. Orpheus played his fine music, relaxing the ever-vigilant hound, while Hermes caused the beast to sleep by tricking it into drinking water from Lethe. Moreover, both the Sybil of Cumae and Psyche tempted it into eating drugged honeycakes, taking advantage of the sweet tooth with which the beast seems cursed.

Woe to anyone who slays Cerberus or deals him lasting harm. Striking the beast with intent to slay, or even simply maim, invokes the wrath of Hades and his bride, who are unkind in their demeanor and will seek vengeance. There is no question that most demigod

Scions can slay the hound Cerberus. Yet it's a true test of a hero's skill to demonstrate his ability to bypass the great beast without slaying it.

THE FIELDS OF THE DEAD

The Fields of Asphodel swarm with the unworthy dead, and the souls of heroes and Scions who lived lives of neither overwhelming good nor evil. In many ways, the dead of the Fields of Asphodel are those most accursed in the eyes of the Gods here, for they hadn't the resolve to be either glorious heroes or wicked villains. In fact, they suffer the most debilitating of all conditions to the eyes of the Olympian Gods: mediocrity.

Passing through the Fields of Asphodel is a strange experience for the living. The pitiful shades cluster around them, brushing them with fingers that feel like cobwebs against the face. The souls of Scions and other heroes simply watch the living pass them by, with looks on their faces as though they were trying to recall something important. The dead here do not remember their existences as mortals, having sipped from the waters of Lethe. Only libations of blood made to them by those in the World allow them to recall the sensations and memories of humanity. Although widespread ancestor-worship once granted the dead recollection, now they are simply gray, confused remnants of great men and women.

As one moves on, the asphodels diminish and black stones lie underfoot. Nearing the basalt Palace of Hades is the Field of Erebus, whose name means "darkness." The black stones that make up this forecourt actually form something of a path, which leads to the base of the staircase that leads up to the Palace proper. This pathway forks at the Palace. One path travels away into deep, cold darkness, while another leads into a place of light, where the scent of apples lingers in the air.

At the crossroads where the three paths meet—called the Great Trivium—sit three men in carved thrones: Minos, Rhadamanthys and Aeacus, the souls of three Scions from ancient days. This crossroads is sacred to Hecate, whose blessings are noted by the presence of the ever-burning torches behind each of the thrones, illuminating her judges. Traditionally, it is the role of Rhadamanthys to judge the souls of "easterners" (from the Greek perspective, of course), that of Aeacus to judge the Hellenes and the peoples of Europe, with Minos casting a deciding vote in the ultimate fate of both.

Those found worthy and heroic, who upheld the Virtues of the Olympian Gods, are permitted to pass into the Elysian Fields, down the road of light. Those found wicked and without virtue must pass down the road into darkness, where the soul is cast onto the outer surface of Tartarus (the Greek Gods' name for the Titans' prison). They remain stuck there as souls once were in the days before the creation of the Underworld, where they can only howl into the cold and black void for all of eternity. Those whose actions were too wicked for the Elysian Fields and too good for Tartarus earn themselves an eternity of bored mindlessness as a shade in the Fields of Asphodel.

Once judgment is rendered, all souls must drink from one of the wells that flank the judges. The largest of the wells—which is really a pool that opens into some of the subterranean flows of the River Lethe—is for most souls to drink from. It renders the soul amnesiac, causing blissful forgetfulness. The other, smaller well, however, is Mnemosyne, or "memory." Only those initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries were permitted to drink of this well. Rather than it cleansing their memories, they retained them and passed to their final reward in a state of responsibility. Whether bound for the Elysian Fields or Tartarus, they knew why they were there. This knowledge made their suffering in Tartarus so much the worse, or their joy in the Elysian Fields was stronger for remembering that they'd earned their places there.

THE PALACE OF HADES

The Palace of Hades stands high over the surrounding lands, glaring down at it from above. Its exterior is flat black basalt, without windows or architectural features, resembling more of a war memorial than a palace of nobility. A flight of stairs, crafted of the same black stone as the Field of Erebus, ascends a full story in height to the single cavernous opening that leads to the throne room of Hades and Persephone.

In contrast to its grim exterior, the Palace within is a place of deep, rich jewel tones, glittering with dusky gold and tarnished silver everywhere. The highly polished, black marble floors reflect the glories above it, creating the impression of standing midway between riches above and riches below, all out of reach of the petitioner. The décor recalls the reason why Hades was called Pluto, "The Wealthy," by the Romans, for its sheer opulence.

The tall thrones of Hades and his queen, Persephone, sit upon a tall dais. His throne is crafted entirely of black basalt, inlaid with silver and deep purple jewels. When Hades sits upon the throne, blood spilled in sacrificial funereal trenches drips down from the ceiling above, spattering his brow with prayer-rich blood. (Rather, it used to. It's been many years since blood has spilled in the name of Hades.) The throne of Persephone is white marble, inlaid with gold accents and deep crimson and burgundy gems the color of pomegranates. When Persephone is gone from Hades, dwelling with her mother Demeter, her throne is covered in a gauzy white shroud, upon which a single pomegranate rests.

The interior of the Palace is tremendously larger than its exterior, holding incredibly ample royal wings for the king and queen of Hades, as well as numerous guest wings for visitors and guests. In the center of Persephone's wing stands a grove of pomegranate trees, with a sky of rich midnight blue-black above, twinkling with stars. Incredible galleries of artwork and riches open to it on all sides, and though it does not seem

to have a roof, there is no place that corresponds to it when the palace is viewed from without. The rest of Persephone's wing is decorated in seasonal motifs, as befitting the daughter of Demeter.

Hades' own wing is close and claustrophobic. The rooms are alternately tight and cavernous, as though one traveled underground. Sounds echo ominously here in the oppressive silence of the place, and the shadows are thick. Few enter into Hades' domain here. Even Persephone insists he visit her wing, refusing to come into his realm.

PERSEPHONE

AKA: Kore, Nestis, Proserpina

Description: The daughter of Demeter and the wife of Hades, Persephone is a divided entity. On one hand, she embodies life and growing things, and the joy that comes in spring; on the other, she is the Iron Queen of the dead, served by flitting shades, and the dread that comes in autumn, when the tribe is unsure who will survive the winter. When she leaves Hades' side, Persephone is fond of walking the World. Her dalliances with mortal men do not cause Hades consternation, for she is not his queen during the warm months of the year. She has been the torch-song singer, the Mafia courtesan, the nurturing prostitute and the gothic diva. Themes of life and death are always mixed up in who she is, and she always wears jewels the color of pomegranates, to remind her of her fate.

Purviews: Epic Appearance, Epic Dexterity, Epic Wits, Death, Fertility, Psychopomp

Abilities: Academics, Empathy, Occult, Politics, Presence, Stealth

Rivals: Hera, Hermes; Hel, Izanami, Isis, Kalfu, Tlaloc

EFFECTS OF THE SHATTERING

The Olympian Gods were among the first to become aware of the shattering of Tartarus. Several years ago, a terrible sound rocked Hades. Some described it as being the sound of a great hammer striking an enormous anvil, while others seemed to have heard ten thousand screams of despair. The sound created terrible ripples in the rivers of Hades, causing waves that washed over the shores, in some cases pulling handfuls of souls into the Acheron, Styx or Cocytus. The Lethean well drained away of its water, and the well of Mnemosyne cracked along its base, spilling its waters into the ground of Erebus. Thousands of the dead in the Fields of Asphodel eagerly lapped at the water upon the stones, recalling their lives for brief moments before being overwhelmed by its power and the ire of the judges.

A moment of silence followed thereafter, and then a great wailing. As mighty Hades watched from his hall, unquiet and angry dead swarmed up the path of Tartarus, wielding terrible shards of black pig-iron-like metal as weapons. Ghosts impaled upon these vile weapons were undone entirely, and even the Gods felt a sting of agony from them. The angry dead swarmed over Erebus, slaying and slaughtering the few dead waiting to be judged, and those wandering the asphodels. The judges were forced to retreat into Hades' palace, and then Hades appeared, girt for battle with stang and helmet. He demonstrated to the angry dead the meaning of his name—Hades, or "Unseen"—and struck at them before they know what had happened. He drove them into the Styx and into the Acheron, and they fled back down the pathway from Tartarus. Worse still, some of the angry dead were clever, and simply pretended to be the wandering, listless dead in the Fields of Asphodel.

Now, Hades is loath to leave his kingdom. Occasional attacks by the angry dead come—sometimes rising from within the population of his kingdom, other times led by titanspawn through the ancient gate to Tartarus. His Olympian brethren have called upon him to aid them in their battles, and he is bound to answer these calls. These are the times when the angry dead and their titanspawn masters prefer to rise up and wreak havoc.

PASSAGES TO HADES

The legends of ancient Greece and Rome are rife with stories of descent into the Underworld, and of the activities of the honored—or despised—dead. There are many ways of entering the realm of Hades. In every case, those who use these Passages find themselves standing on the shore of the Styx, awaiting passage by the ferryman Phlegyas.

Tombs and Funerary Architecture: The Greeks used several kinds of tombs intended to act as a conduit between the lands of the living and those of the dead: walled-in family plots, polyandreion communal graves, and heroon and tholos monumental tombs were the most common among the Greeks. All of them are marked with so-called "sacrificial trenches," where human or animal sacrifices were made to Hades. Their blood collected and seeped into the trench, to soak down to Hades' throne and carry with it the prayers of families to treat the beloved dead kindly. A Scion or other creature of Legend may use this blood trench as a Passage to Hades, dripping his own blood into the trench while he spends a point of Legend. When he opens his eyes from the prayer, he finds himself kneeling upon a stone that rises up on the shore of the Styx.

In contrast, most Romans were cremated. Funereal masks were constructed for the cremation, and the body burned while wearing it. A Scion who finds or constructs one of these ancient masks may don it and

enter a Roman columbarium (i.e., a place where the urns containing the ashes of the dead were placed in niches). Wearing the mask, he need only stand inside the tomb while someone outside the tomb seals the entry. When he then spends a point of Legend, he'll be transported to the River Styx's shore.

Natural Features: Many natural features have served as entries into the Greek underworld. Perhaps the two most famous are the cavern in the Peloponnese and the crater Avernus, located near the town of Cumae. Heracles used the former to enter the Underworld and wrestle Cerberus as one of his Twelve Labors. Both the Greeks and the Romans believed the latter was an entry into the realm of Hades.

Likewise, the Acheron River in northwestern Greece acts as a Passage into the Underworld. Even better, however, is the Nekyiomanteion, an archaeological site along the river excavating a Greek temple dedicated to the dead, once home to an oracle who channeled the ancestors. Although normal Passages can only be used by those with access to the Death or Psychopomp Purviews, the power of this site's connection to necromantic magics allows Scions with access to the Magic or Prophecy Purviews to descend into the underworld of Hades as well.

Rituals: The Greeks and Romans were interested in maintaining contact with the dead, but few rituals were designed to actually take the living to their realm. The Mysteries, however, did just that. In particular, the Eleusinian Mysteries—based around the passion play of Hades' theft of Persephone and the grief of Demeter—the Orphic Mysteries—describing the descent of Orpheus into the Underworld to retrieve his beloved—and the Dionysian Mysteries—based around the sacrificial death, consumption of the God's body and blood by the faithful and resurrection of the wine-and-grain God again—are perfect for that purpose.

These rituals postulated a descent for the initiate into the Underworld that was not one-way, but rather a function of metempsychosis, the transmigration of the soul into successive incarnations, armed with memories of previous incarnations. Mortals were their strongest adherents, but these cults were truly founded by and for the children of the Gods. Scions who take part in these initiatory rituals can use them as a Passage to the Underworld. Moreover, they are guaranteed the ability to return, as long as they are able to drink from the well of Mnemosyne. Doing so returns them immediately to the time and place that they departed, as though they'd never left.

Of course, Scions may also use funereal rites as normal, but they rarely do. Frankly, the Mystery Rites are just as easy to research and perform as funereal rites, but with no risk of death if the one performing the ritual does not do so properly.

Times: The ancient Hellenes had little in the way of national holidays and festivals. Generally speaking, each of the city-states or regions of Greece had its own set of festivals, in which there was generally some celebration of the dead. Honored ancestors were remembered on the anniversary of their deaths, for the most part.

Therefore, Scions of Olympian Gods may actually use the anniversary of a parent or grandparent's death as a Passage into the Underworld, though they must be at the ancestor's gravesite to do so, and must spend an extra point of Legend to facilitate it (for a total of two points).

The Genesia festival of ancient Athens, held approximately a week after the full moon in March, was used to honor the dead, particularly those who died in wars. As such, that date may be used as a Passage into the underworld of Hades. The Roman festival dates of Parentalia (February 13th through 21st) and the Lemuria nights of May ninth, 11th and 13th, in which ghosts were feared to be active may also be used as nights in which to travel to Hades.

HADES ADVENTURE HOOK

For an interesting twist, the Storyteller may decide that Hades was overrun by the forces of the Titans during the initial prison break, which coincided with an absence by Hades and Persephone. It now serves as an armed outpost held by titanspawn forces, perhaps even with several corrupted Scions as its masters. The dead were transformed into spectres, fled into the World to haunt ancient tombs and gravesites or escaped through the gate into the Elysian Fields, permitted there by Rhadamanthys as Minos and Aeacus held off the vanguard of the Titans, falling heroically in battle. Rhadamanthys' final act was to seal the Passage to the Elysian Fields, while Phlegyas fell trying to seal off the Passages between Hades and the World.

HELHEIM

AKA: Hel, Helgard, Niflheim

Ever-cold is the land of Hel, daughter of Loki. The frozen lands of the primordial places became the lands of the dead for those who held to the Aesir, and those cold expanses were affixed to the great prison of the Titans. Hel, the child of Loki and Angrboda, was made queen of this place and given the charge: *Let men reap in death the rewards they earned in life*.

Those who come to this place without dying do so by clambering down the great expanse of Yggdrasil, the tree upon which the worlds of Nordic legend hang like fat fruit. Its lowest, northernmost roots descend into primordial frost, the source of all coldness that seeps into the lands of men. The bark here is rough and coarse, painful to the touch because of its brittle sharpness. Mists swirl around the roots, which are set into a great spring of cold water in which a black shape stirs.

HVERGELMIR AND THE NÁSTRÖND

The great, twisted root of Yggdrasil, touched with rime, descends from a sky of mists and dips into a great wellspring: Hvergelmir. The black waters here are thick with corpses, for all bodies burnt with the proper funereal rites appear in the underworld of the Aesir in these waters. The freezing waters are also rife with poisonous serpents that crawl over, in and about the corpses, striking out at any that continue to move. This great wellspring is the source of all cold waters in Midgard (the Aesir term for the World), springing forth the Élivágar, the 11 great rivers that birthed the World.

More than simply corpses and serpents dwell in these waters, however. The terrible Nidhogg glides through their chill as well. The great dragon—whose kennings are Corpse-Sucker and Malice-Striker—gnaws at the root of Yggdrasil that dips into the Hvergelmir, venting his hate of all the worlds. A terrible beast, Nidhogg is no friend to the Gods. He is a creature of monstrous wrath and spite, seeking only to devour the root of the lands of men and Gods, and to keep consuming until there is nothing left.

When Nidhogg exhausts himself, he catches up corpses floating nearby and gnaws at them, trying vainly to get at the sweet souls within like a hound seeking the marrow of a bone. All his efforts are without purpose, however, for he cannot touch the stuff of souls. Indeed, he serves a valuable purpose to Helheim, for his ministrations free the souls of the dead from the corpse-vessels in which they arrive.

He roars his frustration when the inevitable happens. He worries at a corpse long enough for the soul within to escape. It then slips past his wicked talons with a whisper and flees to the shore. Eventually, Nidhogg's frustration builds, and the waters around him boil and his jaws drip with venom as he turns his hate once more on the much-scarred bark of Yggdrasil's root.

The waters of Hvergelmir lap at a black mud bank, the Náströnd, or Shore of the Dead. The Náströnd acts as the gateway into the rest of Helheim. The mud of this bank is thick with cold and thin sheets of ice that crack as one treads them, and in the chill black muck are impressed millions of footsteps, all overlapping. These are the impressions the dead make on their way through, for the living leave no tracks here.

THE MISTS

The lands of Helheim are filled with chill mists. As the muddy Náströnd gives way to the cold stone of the rest of the Asgardian underworld, the air becomes thick with cold fog. Ice particles gather in eyebrows and beards, and the escaping mist-breath of the living joins the fogs swirling around those who travel these lands. A path of bones, set into the very stone, leads away into the mist. The dead are compelled to take this path, though the living visitor is under no obligation to follow it.

No one knows how large the lands of Helheim are. Many halls of giants litter its geography, however, for it is one of the homes of the frost giants. The frost giants were man-eaters in the days of yore. Since the passing of the legendary ages, however, few frost giants have encountered men, for most were banished from the face of Midgard into the cold depths of Helheim. Large numbers yet remain in the hidden land of Jotunheim (see pp. 113-116).

GJALLARBRÚ AND MODGUD

The path of bones leads to the banks of the river Gjöll. Gjallarbrú, a covered bridge thatched in gold, spans the river, but at its entryway stands Modgud, a giantess. All who approach are challenged to deliver their name and business to Modgud, who will not permit passage to those who do not. In truth, it is not possible to pass over Gjallarbrú without the permission of Modgud, for the answers the visitor gives to her questions determines what the visitor finds on the other side of the bridge. Those who simply sneak, fight or charm their way through without giving answer pass over the bridge only to emerge at its entryway once more, with Modgud waiting for them, a giantish smirk on her ugly face.

Visitors who seek communion with Hel are sent to her hall, as are the spirits of the dead who were cowards, spiteful or deserving of punishment for their sins. The dead who died bravely in the manner of heroes pass to the Feasting Hall, while the dead who were neither wicked nor heroic simply pass into a land of mists similar to the one they just left, save they must wander the cold mists forever, alone.

THE FEASTING HALL

For those bound for the Feasting Hall—including Scions who indicate to Modgud that they simply wish to depart Helheim—the other side of the bridge leads to the base of a mountain. The passage around the mountain twists and turns and is lined with thousands of statues depicting the noble dead with whom Hel has feasted here.

At the mountaintop, which is perhaps an hour's walk from the bridge, there is laid out a great trestle table of fine ash wood. Heroic souls that arrive find a company of the einherjar, with a trio of valkyries, waiting to celebrate their brave death with a feast, before they are taken to Valhalla. While the bravest of souls are taken directly from the battlefield, all souls that die in battle are promised an afterlife in Valhalla by the Aesir. Therefor, Hel is bound to offer them a feast after they pass through her lands. At the culmination of the feast, Hel herself arrives, her corpse-face covered in cloth and she toasts the heroism of the newly dead before departing once more.

To those yet living who come here, the trestle table is empty and a valkyrie awaits them. She points them to a path that leads back down the mountain, opposite the one they came up and bids them farewell. Scions and other creatures of Legend that take this path eventually find themselves walking down a much higher mountain than the one they went up, for they are now on a mountain in the World—specifically one of the many mountains that make up the Scandinavian Mountains range. Each time this Passage is used, the mountain is a different one in the range.

HEL'S HALL

The spirits of the dead that require punishment in the afterlife—cowards, traitors, oathbreakers, kinslayers—find horror at the end of Modgud's bridge. Hel's Hall stands alone upon a small island. The river that surrounds it is black and cold, and knife blades speed past in its quick, spinning current. Every knife that has been used for ignoble purpose among the people of the Aesir finds its way here, to eternally spin in the Gjöll, hungering to cut into the thin flesh of the abhorred dead.

Hel's Hall stands some 50 feet in height, and its wooden beams are carved with the depictions of Hel's own siblings: the terrible world-serpent Jörmungandr and the toothy grin of Fenris. The thatching of the roof gleams white and seems to writhe, for it is woven of the spines of serpents. The entryway looms some 20 feet in height. One-half of its lintel is made of beautiful ash rubbed with aromatic oils, while the other half is a gray, nameless wood, worm-eaten and flaking away with decay. The ignoble dead must step through that hallway.

Those who enter Hel's Hall step down into a river of stinking, flowing blood as deep as a man's thigh. There are no chairs in Hel's Hall, and the denizens thereof do not dare sit, lest the sticky blood pull them under and drown them—though it cannot kill the dead, it is a fearful, painful experience they don't relish. The spines of serpents that form the thatching drip caustic poison from their every point, misting the air with a terrible chemical fetor that wars with the stench of the blood-river to sicken a visitor.

A great table, the height of a man's chest, stands in the middle of the hall, almost in mockery of the kind of feasting tables that mortal halls offer to succor visitors. There is no comfort to be had for the damned in Hel's Hall, however, for though the table is laden with drinking cups and horns of all sort, the large, filthy goats that roam its massive surface fill them only with piss for the dead to drink. The souls here continue to feel thirst, and must sate it occasionally on the urine of the horrible beasts. The table does not even provide sanctuary from the river of blood, for those foolish enough to try to clamber atop the table are kicked or butted from it by Hel's herd.

At the far end of the hall stands the ash-and-rotwood throne of Hel, set with precious black stones and covered with fine furs. Most of the time, Hel can be found here, sitting on the throne, her corpse-face in plain view, calling out the names of the damned and

telling all gathered of their sins. Hel is quite clear—those who come here are here for a reason, and she intends that all know what that reason is.

Hel does not like to be interrupted in her revelry. She lays bare the sins of all who come before her as visitors, unless they are one of the Aesir. Not even Scions are immune to this treatment. In her hall, Hel can tell which of the Aesir Virtues a visitor is lacking in and will home in on those who lack Courage, Endurance, Expression and Loyalty entirely. Should she desire privacy to speak with her guests, the river of blood begins to boil and rage, and the dead shriek in fear as they sink, one by one, from sight until Hel and her visitors are alone.

PASSAGES TO HELHEIM

Rare are the Passages to the realm of Hel. The Norse engaged in ancestor-worship just as many ancient peoples did, but their focus was upon the mighty dead, those heroic figures taken into Valhalla for their bravery and honor. The simple folk who wandered the mists of Helheim were certainly not considered worthy role models for the living, and the damned who suffered in Hel's Hall were remembered only to heap scorn upon their dishonored memory.

Nonetheless, Odin himself gained his rune-cunning through the powers of death, and all rune-cutters among the Nordic folk were understood to have at least one foot in the grave. Likewise, the seidr witches spoke their prophecies and communed with the powers of wood and glade, but in the darkest nights of winter, they were known to invite the spirits of the dead to occupy their bodies, to seek out knowledge long forgotten by the living. The secrets used to gain access can be difficult to ferret out from old occult lore, but the dedicated Scion can find them.

Tombs and Funerary Architecture: Not all funerals were "boat burials." Such showy memorial practices were dedicated to those who died valorously, or who lived lives of greatness. The Nordic peoples left behind many burial sites. Often, these places were group-tombs, where a leader and his followers were interred, or where all the victims of a raid were laid to rest. Because of the belief that the bodies of the dead naturally rose as draugr (see **Scion: Hero**, pp. 294–295), many of these tombs were constructed with a "corpse door," a doorway used to bring the body into the tomb while it was shrouded, so that it never saw the door. Then, after the funereal rites, the door was bricked over, to prevent the draugr from finding its way back to drink the blood and eat the flesh of the living.

A Scion or other appropriate entity of Legend can take advantage of this tradition. It requires finding a tomb of Nordic origins built with a corpse door. The Scion must open the corpse door, enter the tomb and then have another person brick the tomb back up while he lies meditating within, careful to allow no sunlight to touch him he's within. Once the tomb has been resealed, he may spend a point of Legend. The Scion who uses this method to descend into Helheim suddenly plummets from his position of rest, landing in the cold waters of Hvergelmir. Of course, such a path places the traveler in danger of an encounter with the ravenous Nidhogg.

Natural Features: Certain seidr practices were used by witches to descend into the Underworld to gain conference with the dead. The best-known method of doing so involved finding an ash tree of over a century in age. The tree must have a muddy hollow beneath its root system, developed with time and natural erosion or through the deliberate excavation by such witches. Mortal seidr practitioners—called seidhkona if female, or sidhmadhr for the much rarer male practitioners—then crawled into the hollow and entered a trace-like state where their souls traveled to the Underworld. Scions and other appropriate creatures of Legend may simply enter the hollow and spend a point of Legend to continue crawling through the ash roots, to emerge eventually into a tangle of much larger roots: the root system of Yggdrasil that dips into Hvergelmir. Though seidr-workers were in no danger from Nidhogg—being insubstantial and ghostly, not at all to the liking of the meat-devouring, bone-cracking Nidhogg—Scions who come bodily to Hvergelmir by this method most certainly are.

Rituals: During some eras, the Nordic people practiced a "boat burial" rite, involving laying out the body of the deceased aboard a funereal barge, atop a bed of kindling and firewood and surrounded by the symbolic wealth he'd accumulated in the World. This boat was set alight and then pushed into the sea or a river. This ritual may be used by Scions or creatures of Legend to enter into Helheim by spending a point of Legend.

Times: A settlement remembered all its dead in the cold, dark time of the year just before the onset of true winter. Prayers to the dead—noble and mediocre alike—were spoken, asking for the deceased to guide those

HELHEIM ADVENTURE HOOK

Though Hel has not seen new souls in a while, a recent development has ushered new souls into her presence for the first time in centuries. Practitioners of Ásatrú, or Nordic reconstructionist paganism, have begun appearing before the Death Goddess for the first time in a long time. But something else is amiss. For every such pagan who dies and whose soul is sent to Hel, his corpse rises either as a draugr or as the vessel to a terrible spectre in service to the Titans. No one seems to know what's going on, save perhaps for Hel herself.

who might die gently to Hel's presence. The people knew that not all of them might survive the terrible winter ahead, and dying of the weather did not earn one entry to Valhalla. Generally speaking, during the second week of November, a Scion or creature of Legend may spend a point of Legend and find himself walking the shore of the Hvergelmir.

YOMI

AKA: Ne no Katasukuni, Yomi no Kuni

According to the *Kojiki*, the land of Yomi, which translates as the "Yellow Springs," is a place where the dead go to rot forever. It is neither a paradise nor a place of punishment—it is simply where the dead are bound, by natural laws. Ruled by Izanami, who died in childbirth and found herself as one of the dead, Yomi is an unclean place by Shinto tradition.

THE CAVE BENEATH THE WORLD

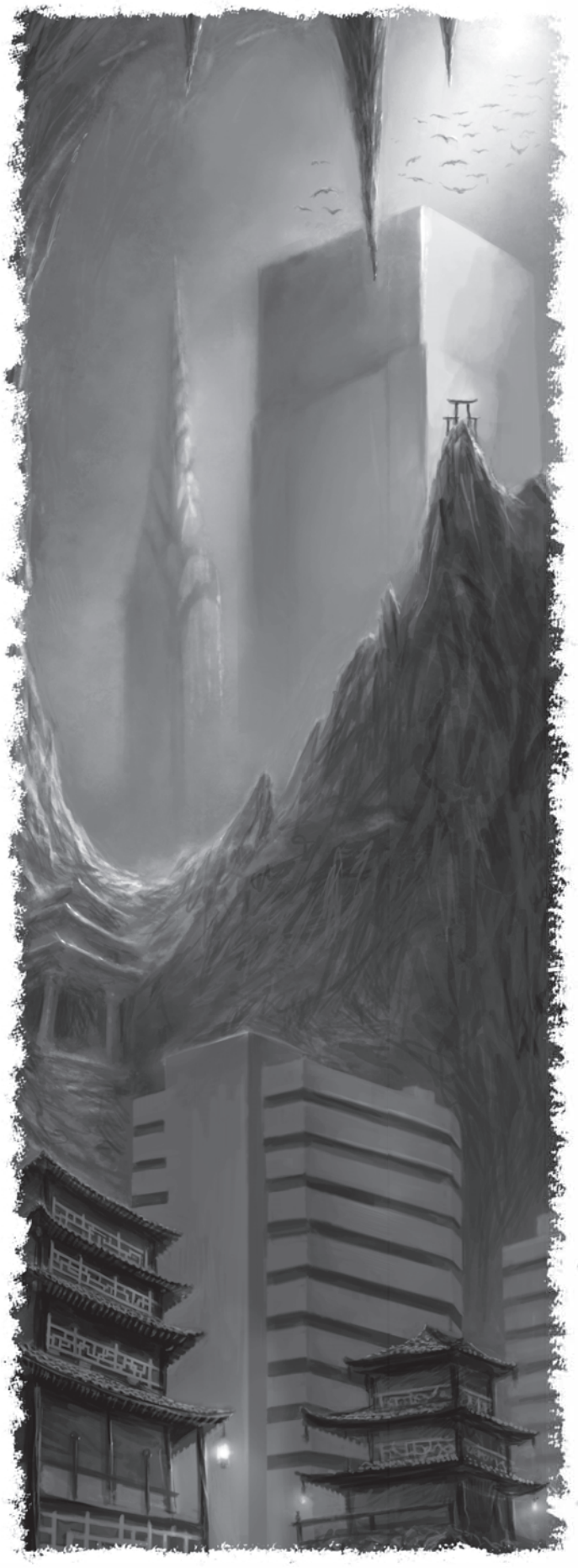
When Izanagi journeyed to Yomi to retrieve his wife, he found a lonely, dark cavern beneath the earth. Within, he found his beloved rotting, half covered in maggots and terrible to look upon. So distraught was she by her appearance that she embraced the powers of Yomi and became its mistress. Izanagi fled, grieving, back to the light, and the two have been forever separated.

The Yomi Izanagi fled and the Yomi that Shinto dead find themselves in are very different places. The power of Yomi is such that when anything dies, its soul finds its way to Yomi. The wise know that not only humans have souls—everything, great and small, is possessed of a spiritual essence. After their destruction, the spiritual reflections of most inanimate objects important in Japan and where adherents of Shinto belief have settled appear somewhere in Yomi. Like the souls of mortals, however, they rot quickly. Most objects simply fade away to nothingness in a few short weeks.

Therefore, the landscape of Yomi is a far cry from the lonely, echoing caverns in which Izanagi found his beloved. These caverns are filled with buildings from every era of Japanese history. Small huts stand next to impressive skyscrapers. Simple prehistoric buildings are scattered among the many buildings from Japan's Sengoku Jidai. This strange collection of edifices is referred to as the Obake, or "honored ghost," by the inhabitants of Yomi.

OBAKE

In the Obake, the peoples of thousands of years of Japanese history and culture mingle. Garb and dwelling-places are no indication of a ghost's age here. Only the amount of decay on a given ghost is a reasonable measure of such things. Nearly all of the ghosts here speak Japanese in one form or another,



and after a few years here, the majority of ghosts end up speaking a strange patois of Japanese that includes words, accents and turns of phrases from every period in Japanese history. Occasionally, a ghost that was in tune enough with Shinto beliefs to descend to the Yellow Springs arrives speaking no Japanese. Such ghosts are shunned by the denizens of the Obake. Referred to as "the lost," they find themselves sleeping on the streets and scavenging as best they can until they can learn enough Japanese to interact with other ghosts. Many ghosts who started out their existences as one of the lost take pity on others they find in such a condition and take them under their wing, teaching them Japanese and the customs of Obake.

The buildings that make up the Obake are from a thousand different styles of architecture, from millennia of history. When a building with some kind of importance to the Japanese people is destroyed in the World, it may appear in the Obake. Some buildings appear for a short term, and then rapidly erode. Wood rots, plaster turns to dust, roof tiles blow away under a ghostly wind, metals corrode. The longer a building has stood, the more likely it is to last in Obake. A single village's mill might appear for a few years, where a building that has served an important role in the lives or cultural identities of multiple generations of the Japanese people is almost guaranteed to appear as a permanent fixture of Obake's streets.

Though buildings appear seemingly at random in the streets of the great metropolis of the Yellow Springs, there are a few distinct districts. When ghosts enter the Yellow Springs, they come in through the paths in the east. The Yellow Spring Mountain serves as the central hub around which the city sits.

The Gardens of the Celestial Son: At the eastern base of the great Yellow Spring Mountain of Izanami, the walled city known as the Gardens of the Celestial Son consists of architecture, gardens and other constructions made to reflect the glory of Amaterasu's mortal descendents: the Japanese emperors. Within the tall, lacquer-tiled walls of the Gardens stands a variety of palaces where emperors have lived, temples where they were consecrated and other buildings important to their lives. Only those ghosts who directly served the imperial family in some fashion are permitted residence within the Gardens of the Celestial Son.

No one truly knows for sure the fate of the various emperors from Japan's history. Although individuals of undeniably imperial bearing are seen occasionally, they are free from the rot that seems to affect the rest of the Yellow Springs' denizens. Some believe these figures are still-living Scions, while others believe that some kind of blessing from Amaterasu grants them undying beauty.

The tops of the wall that surrounds the Gardens are patrolled by ghostly shikome (see **Scion: Hero**, pp. 286–287), part of Izanami's nod to Amaterasu. These beautiful, deathless creatures silently watch all ghosts who come beneath their gaze, and any strange behavior is met with immediate reaction. The shikome shift from silent, placid watchers to shrieking white-faced harridans, all claws and blood lust. The shikome harry intruders toward the Black Mother, a particularly powerful shikome who hangs intruders from a tall arch and slowly devours them, until they reveal the purpose of their intrusion. If an interloper's purpose is righteous, he is given passage, watched carefully by shikome who follow him from the shadows. If his purpose is frivolous, he is simply eaten. Those who refuse to be herded and simply fight are likewise devoured.

The Great Harbor: At the western end of the cavern, on the other side of the Yellow Spring Mountain from the entrance into Yomi sits the Great Harbor. It is a roughly circular body of salt water, complete with small, lapping waves. It is large enough that no human eye can see across it diametrically. Buildings destroyed by tsunamis, important buildings that once overlooked the water and similar structures always appear on the shores of the Great Harbor.

A wide variety of buildings and peoples can be found here. The Great Harbor is home to thick wharves scattered with warehouses and fishing village remnants along the side closest to the rest of the Obake. Its furthest shores are decorated with long-fallen lighthouses and cliff-side palaces, and ancient revered ghost ships sail its waters.

In recent days, the Great Harbor has also proven to be the home of a strange cult of spectres, who come to preach against Izanami. They offer the ghosts who come to hear them a chance at rest and freedom. Those who accept the worship of the Titans and spit upon a plaque bearing Izanami's name are baptized in the thick waters of the Great Harbor. Those who give themselves to such a fate become spectres, the rot of Yomi's ghosts falling from their bodies, replaced with whole, new ghostly flesh. Such entities are in great peril, however, for the shikome occasionally come rampaging through this area, hounding and tasting the flesh of all the ghosts they can find. Those who taste of normal ghost flesh are released to continue their existence. Those who taste of spectral taint, however, are consumed. The ghosts of this area are likely to point out any nearby Scions as suspicious characters during such inquisitions.

The Eternal Market: In the Eternal Market in the north, a million voices cry out the delights of their wares. The ghosts of every kind of merchant reside here, from modern CEOs to ancient fishmongers, from the greatest merchant princes to the least stall-keepers in a great market plaza. The Eternal Market consists of a variety of huge skyscrapers that once served corporate interests. Malls are tucked in among older market squares, and the Market River that cuts through this ward is lined with a variety of small merchant ships, lining up and down the docks with various goods for sale.

The only time the peace is broken here is when the pirates strike. Ancient and notorious pirates who sail the black waters of the Great Harbor sometimes find their way up the Market River, pillaging those they can find, carrying off ghosts to enslave and sell to influential shades in other places of the Obake, and stealing phantasmal goods. Izanami does not provide security of any kind here, so only the yakuza syndicates—made up of both dead yakuza, and those ghosts initiated into the syndicates only in death—provide security. The yakuza demand high prices for protection, but it's nothing compared to what the pirates carry away. The Eternal Market is occasionally wracked by wars between rival yakuza syndicates, but these factions generally band together to deal with pirate menaces in incredible running wars up and down the Market River.

The Ten Thousand Palaces of War: The Ten Thousand Palaces of War are misnamed—or perhaps more properly, ironically named. For some reason, most buildings destroyed through violence and war appear south of the Yellow Spring Mountain. This district is made up of buildings that clearly bear the scars of violent destruction. Small burned villages and tumbled castles of the Sengoku Jidai are the predominant architecture here, for the Hundred Years of Strife were some of the most violent in Japan's history. But in the midst of these ancient feudal buildings stand the occasional structure of more modern design, destroyed by fire or bombing.

The Ten Thousand Palaces of War are also home to those who embraced military concerns in life, from wandering martial artists and ronin to the most modern soldiers. Only those who died on the field of battle are ever allowed to settle here, though its denizens interpret that concept quite broadly. The ghosts here don't welcome violence of any kind against one another. They tolerate those who would attack noncombatants even less. The only exceptions are the spectres that sometimes boil up out of the Poison Sun Ward. The ghosts of the Ten Thousand Palaces of War are dedicated to preventing those horrors from reaching the rest of Yomi.

The Poison Sun Ward: When a terrible sun rose over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, those cities died. Citizenry, buildings, the very spirits of those cities were wiped out in a flash of horror. When the first bomb dropped, the moment of its detonation saw a similar flash in the great cavern of Yomi, and all eyes turned to the terrible light. In the World, where once had stood buildings, all was turned to ruin—some things were destroyed so fast that they left only shadows burnt into the terrain.

In Yomi, when the flash cleared, where once had stood a great empty cavern on the southern edge of the Ten Thousand Palaces of War stood entire neighborhoods of Hiroshima and then Nagasaki. Entire sections of those cities were slain and transported wholesale into Yomi. And, unlike the rest of the gloomy Yellow Springs, these buildings and souls did not have shadows. Those had been left behind in the World. Instead, they glowed, a dismal sickly green illumination where their shadows should be.

Those foolish ghosts who sought to explore the green-glowing buildings were never heard from again. Then, three days after the buildings appeared, horrific spectres—creatures burned beyond recognition, warped and twisted by their deaths and glowing with the sickly light of the Poison Sun—boiled up out of the Poison Sun Ward and dragged every ghost they could find back to their lair. It was only the steadfast defense of the ghosts of the Ten Thousand Palaces of War that pushed them back.

In short order, Izanami herself came to see the ward, her coming presaged by the wild shrieks of her shikome on all sides. She gestured, and a great wall, lined with ghostly lead on its interior, rose up around the Poison Sun Ward. It was a wall without a gate, trapping the terrible, tainted spectres within. Nonetheless, the creatures within the Poison Sun Ward occasionally spill over the walls to attack the citizenry of Yomi, giving voice to their hate and anguish through violence.

YELLOW SPRING MOUNTAIN

The journey up the Yellow Spring Mountain is a simple one, without peril or difficulty. It is also a lonely one, for none of the ghosts of Yomi care to make the trip—the Queen of Yomi does not like to be disturbed. It's not out of fear of her wrath that her subjects leave her in peace, however. The shades of Yomi view their terrible Goddess as a treasured member of the family, to be left to her grief. They know that her separation from her husband—and his horrified reaction to her condition—causes her terrible sorrow. For her efforts at protecting them, she is honored with peace.

Therefore, those who travel the many winding paths to the top of the mountain marvel at the stillness and quiet of the place. Where the base of the mountain is a teeming metropolis many, many times the size of any city in the World, Yellow Spring Mountain is like a shrine. The mountain itself is covered in a variety of flora, all ghostly white cherry blossoms and silvery-leafed vines growing among weeping willows. Small streams of clear water fall here and there down the side of the mountain, making a sound like women weeping. Just before the top of the mountain, each of the paths there ends in a torii, painted mourning white, hung with small bells shaped like Noh masks of weeping characters.

The top of Yellow Spring Mountain is flat and covered in pure white sand. Every morning, small breaths of wind, redolent of the smell of incense and the living, reshape the patterns in the sand. Each such breath is actually a prayer to Izanami from the living, and Izanami spends much of her time walking around the sands of her home, reading what the living say to her.

At the center is the Yellow Spring itself, a great bubbling, steaming spring. In the darkness of Yomi, the power of its waters is such that it reflects light strangely, seeming to be gold like the sun—a constant reminder of

the World Izanami is denied. In the center of the spring grows a mighty plum tree, with deep red fruit hanging from its branches. Those who eat of this fruit may never leave Yomi, as Izanami can well relate, for it is the manner by which she found herself imprisoned. Standing near the spring is a pair of stone statues, one of Izanami in her glorious visage before she was trapped in Yomi. The other was once a statue of Izanagi, but his face has been scarred with great furrows clearly made by Izanami's fingernails, and the place where the statues once joined hands has been shattered by a mighty blow.

Izanami welcomes visitors with great, regal hospitality. She invites them to cleanse their hands and faces in the Yellow Spring before they talk, refusing to speak to any who do not. She also offers them a plum from the branches, but does so only as a courtesy. She hesitates when guests accept, asking them if they are sure. Only if a guest agrees four times (the number four being associated with death) will she give him the plum.

PASSAGES TO YOMI

Because Shinto is a living religion, it is quite easy to find Passages into the lands of Izanami no Mikoto.

Tombs and Funerary Architecture: Although specific funereal architecture is rarely intended to act as a Passage to Yomi, a Shinto or Buddhist temple draped in preparation for a funeral may be used to enter the Yellow Spring. Upon passing into the shrouded center of the shrine, where the body lies in state, a Scion or other appropriate creature of Legend can spend a point of Legend to enter Yomi.

Natural Features: In Japan's Izumo province lies the cavern by which Izanagi fled Yomi in terror and sealed it away from the World. Though this cavern is blocked by a massive boulder, a Scion of great enough strength (generally requiring an Epic Strength of at least 3) can roll the boulder away and use the cavern to enter Yomi. Once the boulder is pulled back into place—or simply allowed to roll back into place, for Izanagi made sure that the boulder desires to seal the cavern eternally—the Scion may spend a point of Legend to shift into Yomi.

Rituals: A Shinto or Buddhist funeral rite, performed upon a Scion, serves the function to transport the Scion to Yomi. On one hand, it is relatively easy to discover a priest or monk knowledgeable in these rituals. On the other, not just anyone can perform such rites. Only a properly ordained member of the Buddhist or Shinto clergy may perform the funereal rite that will allow a Scion to descend into Yomi, and nearly every such priest will refuse to perform such a rite for someone still alive. Alternatively, a Scion of the Japanese pantheon who knows the rite is considered spiritually capable of performing it. (A Scion cannot use the ritual to pass into Yomi himself, though.)

Times: In the middle of August, generally from the 13th until the 15th, the Obon, or Bon Festival, celebrates deceased ancestors and other family memories with scriptures, bonfires to guide the dearly departed home, offerings on family altars and a form of communal dancing called Bon Odori. An appropriate Scion anywhere in the World during this time may spend a point of Legend to enter Yomi. Additionally, however, if the Scion is in one of the Japanese communities that prefer to celebrate the Obon in the month of July, he may use the same three days of that month to enter Yomi as well, but he must actually be taking part in the celebration.

YOMI ADVENTURE HOOK

In the center of the Poison Sun Ward sits a creature that was born just after the detonation of the Hiroshima bomb, and died as the breath left the last person to die from the explosion itself. This creature—which the spectres of the Poison Sun Ward call the God of the Last Breath—radiates the strange deathly radiance that fills the walled ward. Unfortunately, this radiance is deadly to the Gods, and shades are transformed into spectres by its touch. Scions, however, are able to enter its presence, though it is painful to do so. Izanami has a request of the players' characters. They must act as her intercessors and ambassadors to the God of the Last Breath. Izanami believes that it would make a potent weapon against the Titans and wants the Scions to recruit it into the great battle that she sees lies ahead.

GUINEE

AKA: Gine

At the height of the African slave trade, ship captains routinely carried cargo holds filled with more slaves than could possibly survive the trip. Human beings were packed into empty spaces so tightly that only a few people at any given time could sit down. Poor food, miserable sanitation and lack of exercise killed many of the slaves, whose bodies were simply dumped overboard. Those who could escape the hold had no place to run save overboard. Many of the men and women who did manage to escape chose to leap into the deep waters of the Atlantic rather than live a life of slavery.

Is it any wonder, then, that the underworld of the Loa is understood to exist beneath the waves of the Atlantic Ocean? The souls of the dead find themselves afloat on deep, rolling waves beneath a night sky. A single light shines in the distance, and in mere moments, Agwe comes on his boat *Immamou*, holding his lantern aloft. The other souls Agwe has gathered extend their hands, helping the new souls aboard the ship, clasping them in welcome.

And as the sun turns the horizon gold and rose, *Immamou* comes to a great swirling whirlpool, its waters deep black, limned with a silvery foam. Agwe turns and assures those on the vessel that all will be well as *Immamou* tips downward, toward the bottom of the vortex. Drums sound in the deeps, and the chanting voices of the ghede sing a welcome to the new souls.

Thus do the dead enter Guinee.

AGWE

AKA: Agoueh

Description: The Loa of the Ocean has walked among men as often as the other Loa. He always takes the form of a fisherman or someone with some other association with the sea. He is the sea's master, and the assurance of his form reflects this. He's always the experienced, grizzled sailor, the admiral, the captain of the vessel, the owner of the dockyard.

Associated Powers: Epic Perception, Epic Stamina, Animal (Fish), Cheval, Psychopomp, Water

Abilities: Animal Ken, Awareness, Control, Craft, Fortitude, Thrown

Rivals: Legba; Atum-Re, Hermes, Loki, Susano-o, Tlaloc

THE BOTTOM OF THE VORTEX

At the bottom of the vortex lies Guinee. It seems to be an island beneath the waves. It sits upon an outcropping of stone, with deep-sea silt as its soil and beautiful, waving ocean-bed plants as its foliage. The waters around the island are thin and do not seem to exist to the shades that dwell here. The liquid around them is almost invisible and normally ignored. Around the island of Guinee is a deep body of liquid, seemingly colder, darker and more water-like than the water that forms its atmosphere. The dead do not go into those waters, for they know that terrible creatures were once chained beneath them.

Most of Guinee is like a tropical paradise, including beautiful-colored, extravagantly finned fish that move through the water like brightly colored birds through the air. The plants bear many strange and delicious fruits and berries. Something is strange about the dead here, though—many of them seem to wander about in some kind of daze. In truth, the dead here do not remember most of their time among the living. Arriving in Guinee, they lose most of their sense of self and memory of the lives they lived. They are simple entities, content to enjoy their existence in the afterlife.

THE DANGERS OF THE COLD WATERS

The waters that surround Guinee are dangerous to those that would leave Agwe's safety behind. From its establishment, danger has waited beyond the island. The last image many slaves saw as they were thrown overboard was shark-fins cutting the waters, and these horrors followed them here. Spectres in the shape of sharks sometimes cruise these waters, waiting. Moreover, those ships that sank in the great Caribbean storms, taking many slavers to their deaths, are here yet. Such men, dying while attempting to profit from the misery of others, continue their horrific endeavors in the afterlife. Ships full of spectres, all clad in the rough clothing of sailors, are common here. These ships sail through the waters, slowly, with the dead faces of drowned men watching the lights and peace of Guinee. Any souls they can catch in the terrible seas, they seize up and try to clap into irons.

Things became worse recently, however. On the day of the Shattering, great explosions of water—like massive cannonballs hitting the surface of the water—rose into the sky. These continued for hours, surrounding Guinee in every direction. After that, the sea around Guinee became darker in shade and far more dangerous, haunted as it was by titanspawn things from the deeps. Most of these horrors the placid ghosts of Guinee do not even have names for. Mighty Agwe comes to battle these terrors when they rise, but he cannot be everywhere all the time, and some of the peaceful shades of Guinee have been carried off by marauding creatures.

THE BARON'S HOUSE

In the middle of the island, there sits a lovely grand plantation-style dwelling. Its front gate seems to be made from tombstones stacked one atop the other, and the odors of cigar smoke and cheap rum fill the area. This large house is the home of Baron Samedi and his wife Maman Brigitte, though they are rarely present. The big house usually sits with darkened windows.

On the first evening of November, however, during the celebration of Fete Ghede, lights shine from the huge windows, and the large doors are thrown open. Thousands of shades gather in the massive ballroom, kitchens and veranda of the great house as the ghede welcome the dead to celebrate. These celebrations commonly see the arrival of other Loa, as well as nearly every Scion of the Loa that is not somehow prevented from coming.

In celebration of Fete Ghede, the grain alcohol flows freely, and the food is plentiful. Although the shades do not need to eat to survive in Guinee, its consumption brings them memory of their lives, strengthened by the fact that their living descendants are celebrating their memory in similar fashion in the lands of the living.

PASSAGES TO GUINEE

The entries into Guinee are among the most easily accessed of all the underworlds. The reason is simple: Unlike Hades or Duat, souls pass into Guinee all the time. Moreover, most of the Loa are understood to be those who have passed on and gained power and wisdom with age. Voodoo is, at its core, an ancestor religion, and the ease by which its underworld is accessed reflects this.

Tombs and Funerary Architecture: In death, not all adherents of Voodoo become simply ghosts. Some are taken by the Baron to be his assistants and watchers, called the ghede. The gravestone of a person who has become one of the ghede can act as a Passage into Guinee for those Scions knowledgeable in its use. By simply marking three X's in red chalk on the tombstone, a Scion or other applicable creature of Legend may spend a point of Legend, suddenly sinking beneath the earth and plunging into the waters around Guinee.

Natural Features: Voodoo legend teaches that Guinee lies beneath the Atlantic. Therefore, any Scion who travels at least one mile away from the shore into the Atlantic may simply plunge into the waters of the great ocean, spending a point of Legend to allow its currents to bear him to the waters of Guinee.

Rituals: As with many places in the Underworld, funereal rites can allow access to a Scion seeking to enter Guinee. It's not the funeral itself that provides this connection, however, as practitioners of Voodoo are generally buried with Catholic rites. Rather, it is the celebratory wake before the actual funeral that grants this access, a party with plenty of food and alcohol held around the closed casket. A Scion who rests in the coffin around which such a celebration is held may automatically spend a point of Legend to sink into the waters around Guinee.

Alternatively, the so-called "jazz processionals" of New Orleans also offer a Passage into Guinee, partially inspired as they are by such celebratory wakes. Either arranging such a procession for himself or—in more desperate situations—replacing the body in the casket allows the Scion to descend into Guinee as well, though he must pay two Legend to get there thus.

Times: During the feast of Fete Ghede, on November 1, any appropriate Scion may spend a point of Legend to journey to Guinee. Rather than arriving in the waters around Guinee, however, the journey at such a time of the year ends in the Baron's House.

OPTIONS

As a place that still sees the arrival of new souls on a regular basis, Guinee might be an excellent target for a Titan's plans to create new spectre servants. Although it is guarded strongly not just by Baron Samedi, but by all the Loa, Guinee could very well become a battleground in the new war against the Titans. An island besieged by ancient horrors that rise from the black waters surrounding it would certainly need all the defenders it can get, especially since not all of the Loa have the luxury of being there all the time.

GUINEE ADVENTURE HOOK

In a recent titanspawn attack, a number of people were killed. During the course of investigating exactly what happened, the Scions discover that one of the victims was a practitioner of Voodoo. Although the state of forgetfulness that comes over souls when they arrive in Guinee might work against them, if they can find the shade in question and take it out of Guinee, it will remember what happened, providing them with an eyewitness account of the strange occurrences.

MICTLÁN

AKA: N/A

To the Aztecs—or, more properly, the Mexica—human life was considered ephemeral and precious. It was wonderful, and of great worth, while it existed, but it faded quickly, like flowers or maize. It is the value of such things that made them worthy for use as sacrifices, and their withering by time and nature was a cause for sorrow.

Those Aztecs who died bravely in battle traveled to the House of the Sun, Tonatiuhican, an eastern paradise to rest for four years before returning to earth in the form of hummingbirds or other exotic birds. Women who died in childbirth traveled to the western House of the Twofold, Omeyocan, though they were occasionally allowed to return to earth in the form of ghosts bringing ill omens as warnings. Those who died from lightning, leprosy or other illnesses traveled to the southern paradise of Tlalocan, domain of Tlaloc, a misty land where they dwelt with plentiful food and creature comforts. These three paradises do not touch the Underworld, and are instead places of reward.

It is only Mictlán, where all the other dead travel to, which touches the Underworld. The journey into Mictlán is difficult, scouring away the bitterness and sadness of mortal life, leaving the ghost purified to come before Miclántecuhtli, the Lord of the Dead, and his wife Mictecacihuatl, who is also called Santa Muerte.

Aztec Bone Imagery

Those not of the culture often consider the skeletal imagery in Aztec religion, spirituality and culture to be somewhat morbid. It should be noted that bones and skeleton symbols were signifiers of hope and the promise of future life, however. The Aztecs believed that—like the seeds in the middle of flowers, and the kernels on an ear of maize—bones were effectively the vehicle of future life. When someone died, they were interred in the ground, and new life sprang forth from that spot. The symbol of "bone as seed" extended even to the Aztec creation myths, where the current batch of humans were effectively hatched from the bones of the previous generation of Gods, watered with the blood of Quetzalcoátl.

THE TRIALS

Before the soul of the departed could find rest, it had to undertake a journey into the Underworld that tested its mettle. All souls were assumed to make it through this journey. Unlike with the trials of Duat, souls were not assumed to be snuffed out in the attempt. Some souls needed more tempering than others, however, and took longer to complete some trials.

The Deep River: The Aztec underworld is separated from the rest of existence—as are so many underworlds—by a great river, which has no name in Aztec legend. Its shallows swirl strongly, and the further out a shade travels, the stronger the current. It is confusing, running over many rocks that churn the water to white foam. Those who cannot find their way to the other side of the river could be trapped here forever; those who manage to find their way back to shore are doomed to haunt the World as ghosts.

In order to pass through this trial, the Mexica dead were buried with the corpse of a Xoloitzcuintle, a tawny dog breed that instinctively understood how to cross the river. Fortunately, many of these ghost dogs served their masters and then stayed behind to help others across the river. Many shades have been rescued from the swirling cold of the river by the sudden appearance of a tan-hued hound insistent on saving them. Simply grabbing the tail or fur of the guide hound is sufficient to get across the river.

System: The river is a test of Loyalty. Those crossing through the river must gain a number of successes equal to the years they were alive on an extended (Stamina + Loyalty) roll, with each roll representing an hour. Those with three dots of Loyalty attract a hound, which grants an additional die. Those who were buried with a hound automatically gain this bonus. Should any roll result in a botch, the shade or Scion is cast back upon the near shore, and all successes are lost. He must rest for a time before trying again (a day for Scions, or a month for shades).

The Joined-Mountain Pass: Just beyond the ancient cold river of the dead lies what appears to be a great mountain cliff. In truth, it is two mountains, shoved into one another so that the edges where they meet are tall and flat, with only a small crevasse between them. It is exhausting to travel through here, and there is no

water. Corpses among the Mexica were often buried with skins of water to allow them to pass through here with ease; those who have no water receive a -1 penalty to the Conviction tests at the Obsidian Mountain.

The Obsidian Mountain: Exiting the crevasse, a traveler to Mictlán finds himself at the base of a great mountain made entirely of cutting obsidian. A million hand- and foot-holds are chiseled into its surface. Its face is caked with dried blood, however, for it is a painful ascent. Every bit of flesh that comes into contact with the razor-like flakes of obsidian comes away bloodied.

System: The climb is a test of Conviction. Those climbing the mountain must gain a number of successes equal to the years they were alive on an extended (Strength + Conviction) roll, with each roll taking an hour. Should any roll result in a botch, the shade or Scion tumbles back down to the base of the mountain, and all successes are lost. He must rest for a time before trying again (a day for Scions, or a month for shades).

The Icy Knife-Winds: The top of the Obsidian Mountain ends in a great peak of blowing winds. The way is difficult, for the only path through is a thin ledge across which the cold winds blow like knives. In these winds are voices, crying out the betrayal and treacheries of the traveler, questioning his adherence to his responsibilities in life. Every child of the Mexica learned a simple chant that hushed those voices. (The player of a modern traveler can make a [Intelligence + Occult] roll, difficulty 4, for his character to recall this chant as well.) Those who do not know this chant must endure the constant attacks, inflicting a -1 penalty to the Duty rolls in the following trial.

The Place of Waving Flags: Descending from the ledge, a traveler finds himself at the opening of a valley. The length and breadth of the valley floor is lined with flagpoles, upon which whip a number of flags marked with the symbols of ten thousand allegiances. These symbols were once simply family markings, city seals and the icons of Gods and cults, but the flags in this valley have multiplied many times. Corporate logos, advertising symbols, the symbols for money and stock market abbreviations all decorate flags here. To reach the end of the valley, the traveler must know what was important in his life. In the flags, he will find symbols of his duties in life, and he must travel from one flag to the next. Those traveling together must go their separate ways here, meeting back up at the end of the valley.

System: The maze of flags is a test of Duty. Those passing through here must gain a number of successes equal to the years they were alive on an extended (Perception + Duty) roll, with each roll taking an hour. Should any roll result in a botch, the shade or Scion finds himself at the entrance to the valley, and all successes are lost. He must rest for a time before trying again (a day for Scions, or a month for shades).

The Ledge of Arrows: Past the valley of flags, the traveler must venture out onto a ledge. On one side is a sheer drop into misty nothingness; on the other is the face of an obsidian cliff. It seems peaceful, but those that step out onto the path discover that all is not as it seems. Halfway through, a traveler can hear a whistling sound. Suddenly, from out of the mists comes a flight of arrows. All who travel over this ledge are struck by several arrows and bleed onto the ledge itself. None that cross it are spared, for these arrows are the arrows of sacrifice. As the spirit is struck—once for each dot of Willpower—he recalls one moment in his life where he made some kind of sacrifice. Though the process is painful, the arrows melt away into mist at the end of the ledge, and those so pierced regain all their Willpower.

The Haunt of Heart-Beasts: This ledge opens to a great jungle, filled with all manner of creatures. The light overhead filters down through the thick canopy, and the sounds of things moving through the jungle foliage is all around. A dim half-light, like twilight, illuminates the Haunt, and it is filled with beasts. Shortly after travelers enter the jungle, terrible creatures begin to attack them. The creatures seem to be normal jungle beasts: jaguars, great serpents and lizards, terrible sword-beaked birds with glorious plumage, vicious monkeys with rending talons. These creatures attack, attempting to drive claws, beaks and heads through the chest of those they attack, in order to seize out the heart of the traveling shade, leaving his chest bloody and gaping.

The dead of the Mexica were buried with a fat jade bead, for the beasts of this haunt sometimes mistake those baubles for the hearts of mortals. Once one of the beasts has seized up either the heart or jade bead, the rest of the animals leave that traveler alone. Those whose hearts are actually stolen receive a -1 penalty to the following Courage rolls on the Path of Stone. Strangely, it does Scions and other living travelers of the haunt no damage to have their hearts plucked from their chests. Of course, they cannot leave Mictlán until they recover their hearts, which await them in the Windowless House.

The Path of Stone: The path through the jungle narrows, until it passes through a short tunnel in a mountainside. When a traveler emerges, there is only a lonely stone span ahead of him. On either side of this bridge is an empty drop into misty nothingness. At the end of the path stands a great pyramid, without windows, crafted entirely of bone and white rock. The path is wide, the footing is sure and the way is straight, but with the first step upon this bridge, a traveler's heart quails in fear.

Every fear the traveler has ever known revisits him at this moment of testing. A cold hand clenches the hearts of those who passed the beasts unmolested, and winds of agonizing terror blow through the hollow place in the chest of those who did not. This is the final test. One cannot dwell forever in the house of the dead with fear in the soul, and so, it must be overcome here. Those traveling on the road often stop, shivering in their tracks. Usually, they confront their fears and

keep going, but sometimes, the terror is too much, and they pitch off the trail, plummeting into the void below. Such folk awaken at the head of the path in a few hours time, ready to make the assay once more.

System: Walking the path of stone is a test of Courage. Those making the journey must gain a number of successes equal to the years they were alive on an extended (Wits + Courage) roll, with each roll representing an hour. Should any roll result in a botch, the shade or Scion tumbles from the path into unconsciousness, waking at the head of the path once more, and all successes are lost. He must rest for a time before trying again (a day for Scions, or a month for shades).

THE WINDOWLESS HOUSE OF MICTLÁN

In the great stepped pyramid at the end of the path, the dead rest. Called the Windowless House, this pyramid is massive. It extends many miles beneath the surface, for the bit of it that juts up above the soil is merely the top tenth of the great house of Miclántecuhtli and his bride.

Within the deeper levels, the dead dwell in silence. Rare is the instance when one of the souls of the dead desires to speak. All contemplate their lives and listen for the prayers that their descendants say for their souls. The feast tables of Miclántecuhtli groan with great platters of steaming, wonderful foods, but the dead never partake of it, save when they hear prayers from their descendants and during the *Dia de los Muertos*. Only occasionally do the dead speak, and even then, it is simply to whisper to one another, a susurrus of greetings, well-wishes and fond hopes that they might hear from their loved ones soon.

The domain of the lord of Mictlán is dark and warm. The living often find it somewhat sinister, but to the dead, the warmth and lack of light are like a blessing, allowing them to nap, read the ten thousand chiseled scriptures and other writings on the walls, or perhaps find a wall on which to add their own memories. Spiders, owls and bats are common in the darkness here, and the ghosts are careful to treat them with delicacy and reverence, for they are sacred to Miclántecuhtli.

The throne room of Miclántecuhtli and Mictecacihuatl is a grand thing. Directly beneath the peaked roof, the great tiered dais rises, set with the skulls of great men on every step thereof. Two stone thrones sit, back-to-back, covered in white, dusty cloth. The dais slowly turns, surveying the room fully once every 11 hours. Around the room are great risers chiseled into the walls, rising like the seating in a stadium.

The dead file into these places to gaze adoringly upon their king and queen. Anytime one of the dead is permitted to eat at the table of Miclántecuhtli, he brings a morsel of the food with him here, to cast into the air above his lord and lady. With a flurry of feathers, owls snatch these morsels of food out of the air and bring them swiftly to the regents. Santa Meurte reaches out with dainty skeletal fingers and slips the offerings beneath her veil. She is much more active than her lord, though. Miclántecuhtli sits, his skull head back against the back of his throne, in a posture that suggests a man dreaming in his chair. Owls that bring him food simply

drop it into his open mouth, sometimes warranting a quick, quavering touch from the lord of Mictlán's hand, before it drops again.

The dead understand that deep beneath the Windowless House, however, there are unspoken-of horrors, creatures that dwelt in the World many suns before the creation of men. The deeper places run cold, and the dead avoid these corridors, full of whispered imprecation and unspoken threats. Times have changed, though, and there are rumors that some of the dead occasionally disappear. Something is loose in the great Windowless House, and the lord and lady of Mictlán do not wish to see it.

PASSAGES TO MICTLĀN

Although the days of constant streams of new souls descending into Mictlán are long past, there are still enough of those who hold to the old ways—or syncretize the beliefs of the old Mexica with the religion of Rome—that Mictlán still sees the occasional new soul. Therefore, the Passages between Mictlán remain open.

Tombs and Funerary Architecture: A variety of Aztec tombs, both common and royal, could serve as Passages into Mictlán. Most folk were buried in a squatting position, as though resting before a journey, with a small jade bead, a skin of water and a sacrificed tawny-colored dog to act as their guide across the river of the dead. A Scion desiring passage to Mictlán may likewise enter such a burial site and be sealed within. He doesn't need those accouterments to enter Mictlán, but his journey will be the safer for them.

Natural Features: Mictlán was thought to lie "to the north," though the actual location was assumed to be beyond a river. The identity of this river has changed many times throughout history. Currently, that river is the Rio Grande, along the border between the United States and Mexico. The Scion need simply immerse himself in the river (a somewhat disgusting prospect, considering the number of maquiladora plants along the border that use it as a dumping site for industrial waste) and spending a point of Legend. In so doing, the Scion or other appropriate creature of Legend is transported into the cold river that acts as the entrance to Mictlán.

Rituals: Two different rituals may grant a Scion or other appropriate creature of Legend passage into Mictlán. The first is a Catholic funeral, though there are often other, pagan elements present. For instance, a family might slip a bottle of water with a jade bead at the bottom of it into the coffin at the last moment or burn a candle to Santa Muerte on the grave of the newly interred. A Scion who has such a funeral performed for himself must be able to convince an ordained priest of the Catholic church to perform it, but the simple addition of those symbols sympathetic to Mictlán is sufficient to provide passage.

The second kind of ritual is a sacrificial ritual. This adheres to the normal rules for potentially lethal rituals of the kind. The knife must literally plunge into the chest of the Scion as he spends a point of Legend and his heart is drawn out. If it is performed properly, as the heart is lifted from his chest, both he and his heart will turn into a fine white ash that blows away immediately, with him appearing hale and whole at the riverbank in Mictlán.

Times: On *Dia de los Muertos*, or the Day of the Dead, Mictlán draws closest to the World. All Saints' Day, November 1st, sees the beginning of the celebrations of the dead in Mexico and many other South American countries, but it isn't until the sun has set on the first of November that the underworld draws close. From that moment, until midnight on November 2nd, any appropriate Scion may simply spend a point of Legend to travel to Mictlán, appearing on the far side of the river.

OPTIONS

For a far more terrifying version of Mictlán, Scions might discover an abandoned Windowless House haunted by a few terrified souls. The corridors are largely empty, with no sign of the lord or lady of Mictlán. Should they manage to find one of the hiding souls, she can tell them what has happened. First the lady of Mictlán disappeared, investigating the disappearances of ghosts in the lower catacombs of her domicile. Then, one morning, Miclántecuhtli himself disappeared from his throne. The dead, unable to leave the Windowless House, began to disappear faster.

MICTLÁN ADVENTURE HOOK

Deep in the private chambers of the lord and lady of Mictlán lie the bones of the Gods who lived in the sun before the present days. At the dawning of the new age, Quetzalcoátl stole some of them to make the new race of men. These bones have great power—power to destroy as well as create. Some patron asks the Scion to go to Mictlán and come back with some of the bones, that a weapon might be forged with which to destroy the Titans. Of course, part of the duties of the lord and lady of Mictlán includes the defense of these bones against all forces.

THE RAGNARÖK GAMBIT

CHAPTER FIVE

Following the events of "The Long Road to Heaven" in **Scion: Hero**, the young Scions had established themselves as up-and-comers in the eyes of the Gods. They'd been set to a comparatively inglorious task in guard duty and, from there, distinguished themselves by finding an important relic, learning how to use it, and trying to reclaim it from the knaves who'd stolen it from them.

The endeavor didn't end perfectly, however, as warriors from the realm of the dead erupted forth and stole the relic, the Black Feather Shroud, forcing the Scions to retreat before the sheer weight of numbers. The Scions lost the Shroud but learned that Loki, the trickster-God, had either the Shroud or information pertaining to it and would contact them in the future.

"The Ragnarök Gambit" begins after that fateful decree. In the intervening time, the characters will likely pursue an increase in their Legend—whether consciously or otherwise—and will eventually find themselves swayed yet again from the original plan. In addition, this period witnesses an alarming situation for the players' Scions. They find themselves cut off from the Overworld, unable to communicate with their divine parents, with little they can do about it. In the absence of divine direction from their patrons, the characters have little choice but to rendezvous with Loki, who has sent word he wishes to meet with the Band in Reykjavik, Iceland. As a God himself, he might have answers to the mystery of the silence from the Overworld, assuming he can be trusted.

SYNOPSIS

En route to Iceland, the Scions' plane (or boat or autogyro or flying carpet...) is drastically diverted. The characters find themselves on Aeaeae, the island home of Circe. There, they meet a fellow Band of heroic Scions who report a similar inability to communicate with their divine parents. During their travails on the island, the characters also meet an oracle possessed by Fate, who reveals that the Scions will be able to reach the divine realms themselves if they risk the perils of the Underworld, since the Underworld connects to both the Overworld and the World.

The particular route to the Underworld that they must take, however, is one that lies beneath Antarctica—in the mythic Greek tradition of traveling under the World's surface and crossing an august body of water. This route also requires the passage of a gauntlet between two titanic monstrosities. Once they cross the forbidding gates into the Underworld, the Scions will be able to find their way into the realms of the Gods.

When the Scions find themselves in Antarctica, they must first put a stop to a dread plan being enacted by Kane Taoka's Band of nefarious Scions, the Shinsengumi. Kane had no idea the heroes would be there, however. His presence relates to the proto-Greek civilization that once thrived on the lost continent of Atlantis, which sources

indicate now lies beneath the frozen wastes of the South Pole. Kane intends to raise Atlantis, turning its primal energies loose on the World in hopes of provoking a confrontation with the Gods themselves, and thereby having the opportunity to strike down his hated mother, Amaterasu.

Therefore, it falls to the players' Scions to foil Kane's plot. As they make sure the ruins of Atlantis remain forever beneath the icy sea, they find their portal to the Underworld and pass through it to the realm beyond. Ultimately, the Scions are able to negotiate the nightmare geography of the dead realm and find the portal that will lead them out of the Underworld and into the realm of divinity to reestablish contact with their divine parents—they think.

Fie and shame upon those scurrilous evil Scions, but they're not down for the count yet. Unknown to the players' characters, Kane follows them into the Underworld and draws his abhorrent patron there. A final confrontation with the agents of Mikaboshi takes place as the Titan pours himself into the Atlantean underworld, seeking to subsume that realm and eventually the entire Underworld into himself.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Much of what is going on, and much of what will happen over the course of "The Ragnarök Gambit," occurs behind the scenes. The players' Scions won't necessarily learn all of this during the story itself, but we include it here so you can keep the motivations straight while you're doing your job as Storyteller. Even if some of these details never come up in play, you at least will know why things are taking place as they do.

Loki's ultimate intention is to bring Ragnarök to pass. To this end, he's enlisted the aid of the Titans, and is working with several of them to hasten "the fate of the Gods." One aspect of Loki's plan is to cut off communication between the Overworld and the World, and between the Gods and their Scions. To this end, the Titan Mikaboshi has interposed Darkness between the Overworld and the World, causing a metaphysical eclipse that separates those two planes entirely.

Meanwhile, Loki has been secretly aiding Kane Taoka through Sly Guiler, providing information on how Kane might be able to strike a serious blow against Amaterasu. Although the death of Amaterasu is of little importance to Loki's plans, it could potentially aid him in his goals. (It certainly couldn't hurt.) It's really more of a carrot on a stick he's dangling to get Kane to raise Atlantis and begin Fimbulwinter, though.

In the Overworld, the Gods aren't sitting idly by and watching their own destruction take place. In the midst of renewed fighting with the newly freed Titans, they've coordinated with various Gods of Fate to devise their own plot to take advantage of the situation at hand—metaphysical eclipse, communication blackout and all. The key to that plan lies with the Gods' Scions.

The Gods have faith that their children will eventually come to the conclusion that they're going to need to go through the Underworld in order to re-establish contact. (After all, it's the only "place" adjacent to both the World and the Overworld.) In fact, they want their resourceful children to lead Kane Taoka into the Underworld as well. They plan to use the corrupt Scion to lure his patron Titan, Mikaboshi, into a cunning trap. Doing so will not only take a dangerous Titan adversary off the battlefield, it will also end the communication blackout.

The grand reward at the end of this odyssey, for the Scions at least, is that they'll have symbolically "died" by passing through the Underworld and then moved from it into the divine realms—a recurring demand of apotheosis. In doing so, they won't have stolen godhead, as Kane tried with the Black Feather Shroud. They will have earned it legitimately, at no threat (or no *immediate* threat) to their already divine parents. As Odin hung on the tree and retained his divinity, as Christ himself returned to life after three days dead, so too will the characters' Scions have survived their visit to the realm of the dead. Thus will they be "reborn" as Gods. Of course, they won't know that until all is said and done.

The best-laid plans of Gods, mice and men inevitably go awry, though, and both sides of this secret scheme have already experienced monkey wrenches in their plans. Loki's original scheme was to stall the Scions in Reykjavik long enough for Kane and the Shinsengumi to raise lost Atlantis. The diversion of the characters' voyage from Iceland to Aeaeae derailed that initiative. Plus, with Mikaboshi's Titan eclipse in effect, Loki is forced to work with what he has in the World. He's not in any rush to test the perils of the Underworld himself... especially after duping his daughter, Hel, into causing her diversion at the end of "The Long Road to Heaven."

At the same time, the Scions are effectively flying blind without divine direction, since the Gods won't tell them anything about the plan. The Gods *could* potentially sneak a messenger out of the Overworld through the Underworld to bring the Scions up to speed, but they consider even that course of action too risky. If any of the Titans laying siege to the Overworld spotted the messenger—especially a Titan of Darkness, such as Mikaboshi or Erebus—the discovery could prove ruinous to the whole scheme. Instead, all they can do is hope their children are worthy of their divine legacies and able to step up in this time of crisis.

So how exactly does it all go down? Let's find out.

STORYTELLING KEYS

While it's possible to just pick up where "The Long Road to Heaven" ended and jump right into "The Ragnarök Gambit," we don't recommend it. Your Scions might not have had enough time to increase their Legend scores to a point sufficient to face the threats in this story, for one. As well, the cycle we present over the course of these **Scion** titles represents only the greater story arc of the **Scion** setting. The characters need to have their own, unique adventures and quests, all with unique personal significance to each player and her character.

In mythology, the journeys in between each of the critical events of the quest were often as important as the quest itself. Witness Odysseus losing six of his sailors to Scylla, witness Emperor Jimmu's doomed eastward and successful westward campaigns, witness Popocatépetl's duplicitous call to battle. The events of these journeys are what establish the heroic characters' importance. The events that occur between the points of the larger **Scion** plot do the same for your players' characters.

The following section describes a few overarching concerns that will affect the Scions as they undergo these personal journeys and endeavors. Use these points as a basis upon which to build those encounters, and bring them in as you see fit to reinforce the ultimate themes of the cycle and of **Scion** itself.

FLYING BLIND

One of the important facets of "The Ragnarök Gambit" is the inability of the Scions to communicate with their divine patrons. With Mikaboshi blocking off the Overworld, the Scions find themselves utterly lacking in divine guidance.

This situation provides an opportunity for strong roleplaying. The characters, however briefly, are unaccountable to the Gods. The Gods can't talk to the Scions, and the Scions can't talk to the Gods. As the characters have no idea that this is a temporary situation, some might be tempted to indulge a little bit of their burgeoning power. Such makes for potentially great vignettes of morality, as well as chances to confirm or deny the suggestion that power corrupts. Storytellers are encouraged to plan or improvise these concise morality plays, giving the characters chances to exult in their nigh-divine power or to do the right thing, whatever that might be under the circumstances.

Specifically, certain aspects of divinity that the characters might have taken for granted cease to work while Mikaboshi cuts the Overworld off from the World. Those characters who have kept the divine signet trinkets from "The Long Road to Heaven" will

feel them go cold, as if whatever "battery" was powering them suddenly ceased. Likewise, characters attempting to commune with their parents receive no replies.

On the other hand, certain divine powers continue to work. Epic Attributes, Knacks and Boons function as normal. The Followers, Creature and Relic Birthrights all function as normal as well. The Guide Birthright is likewise effective unless the guide in question is a God who was in the Overworld at time of the Titan eclipse. The downside isn't obvious, but the players' Scions will eventually learn of it. Those Gods who were in the World at the time of the Titanic realm's intercession remain trapped here, and all of their powers function here except those that *should* enable instantaneous travel between the World and Overworld.

While the Scions' patrons had already removed themselves to their divine homes, Loki is still at large in the World, as he's slated to meet with the characters soon after the story's beginning. This state of affairs gives you a little flexibility to place some of the other Gods in the World too if you come up with an interesting side plot that involves the divine. It's recommended, though, that you not use any of your players' Scions' own patrons. If one were in the World, it would make sense for whichever God was here to explain the divine ruse then and there to the characters. Since much of this story relies on the heroic urge of the Scions to find out why their connection to their august parents has been so suddenly severed, having those parents present and able to reveal the mystery takes much of the motivation out of the cycle. Note also that any Gods caught out of the Overworld at the time of the Titan eclipse don't know what caused the eclipse and aren't in on the Overworld Gods' plan to deal with it.

CONNECTING THE STORY LINES

If you've played through the events of "The Long Road to Heaven," you'll remember that at the conclusion of that story, Loki wants the characters to meet him at a time an place of his choosing. "The Ragnarök Gambit" begins just before that meeting, which he's arranged in Reykjavik, Iceland.

What the characters have been doing during that time is up to you and them, but you'll want to keep several things in mind. "The Ragnarök Gambit" assumes that the players' Scions begin this story in the cycle at Legend 5—they're neophyte demigods, and the story arc here will take them to the edge of godhead.

If your players' characters haven't yet achieved at least Legend 5, you'll want to create a few interstitial scenes or even full stories whereby the characters can earn enough Legend to put them at that footstep of demigodhood. We offer a few methods among our various story seeds, but you know your troupe better than we do. Custom-tailoring each Scion's increase in Legend to events of the story will always prove more resonant than our general story suggestions.

As an expeditious remedy to the situation, you could always simply declare that the Scions are all Legend 5—and thus eligible for the upgrade package outlined in Chapter One—but doing so robs the players of much of the context of the cycle. Still, in a pinch or in a quick-start situation, such as a new player's Scion joining the Band or the death of an old Scion and the introduction of his replacement, simply making the adjustment might prove easiest. (You could also just use the pre-generated signature characters from Chapter One, as we've upgraded them.)

If you truly want to fill in the details of the heroes' odyssey, though, what happens in that time between monumental events illustrates the state of the World itself. In general, the players' Scions become increasingly aware of weird things occurring around them that can only be described as legendary or mythic. Yet while the Scions witness these odd occurrences front-and-center or simply see them out of the corners of their eyes, the rest of the World either misses out on the things that don't affect it or just whistles past the graveyard in willful ignorance.

Of course, these strange occurrences are tied to the characters' own increase in Legend, and when we say they don't affect the rest of the World, we mean to imply they've had no greater effect *yet*. As the story progresses, and as the characters witness all of these uncanny incidents, they should have a growing sense of their responsibility for such weirdness. The masses overlook the weirdness because it occurs only in the proximity of the Scions. Since Scions are the focal point of it, it most directly affects only them.

Two options to add to your toolbox in this regard are intensity and locale. Intensity refers to the severity of the mythic incursion. As the characters' Legend increases, so too should the weirdness or threat posed by the event in question. At Legend 2, say, the characters might attract the attention of a formerly dormant lindwurm or other minor beast, as they did in the beginning of "The Long Road to Heaven." At Legend 4, a harpy might alight in the character's penthouse suite, or a sculpture among his luxurious belongings might prove to be a shabti (see pp. 230-231) and come to life. Whatever the case, start the mythical dial on the World's lowest setting and slowly turn it up, gradually increasing the severity and significance of the legendary events.

Locale refers to those strange things that characters learn about that don't happen in their immediate surroundings. This is to remind them that there are other Scions out there, and that strange stuff is happening to them too as their own Legends increase. An example here might be a character seeing a story in the newspaper about a "dinosaur fossil" being found washed up on the shores of the Mediterranean that scientific testing reveals

to be inexplicably recent. The story might be presented as a curiosity or as evidence of a faulty scientific method, but that fossil sure looks like it might belong to a monster similar to the one the Band fought on a trip from Las Vegas to San Francisco. Another example might be a human-interest story about a crazy old one-eyed veteran who always sits on the same park bench and feeds the birds. Most people don't pay this story more than cursory heed, but the characters might notice strange details, such as the fact that the old-timer is feeding crows instead of pigeons. Naturally, the Scions might recognize a Scion of Odin (if not the old man himself)... but the rest of the World just sees an old dude whiling away his twilight years with the birds in the park.

The key with these encounters is that the jaded people of the World rarely see what such events truly represent, assuming they even notice in the first place. Your job is to see that normal-seeming events that nevertheless garner attention have a glint of mythology to them that the average person just won't understand but that your characters will pick up on.

What sorts of bizarre creatures and strange occurrences might the Scions witness? We offer some suggestions.

LEAVING OR LIVING IN LAS VEGAS

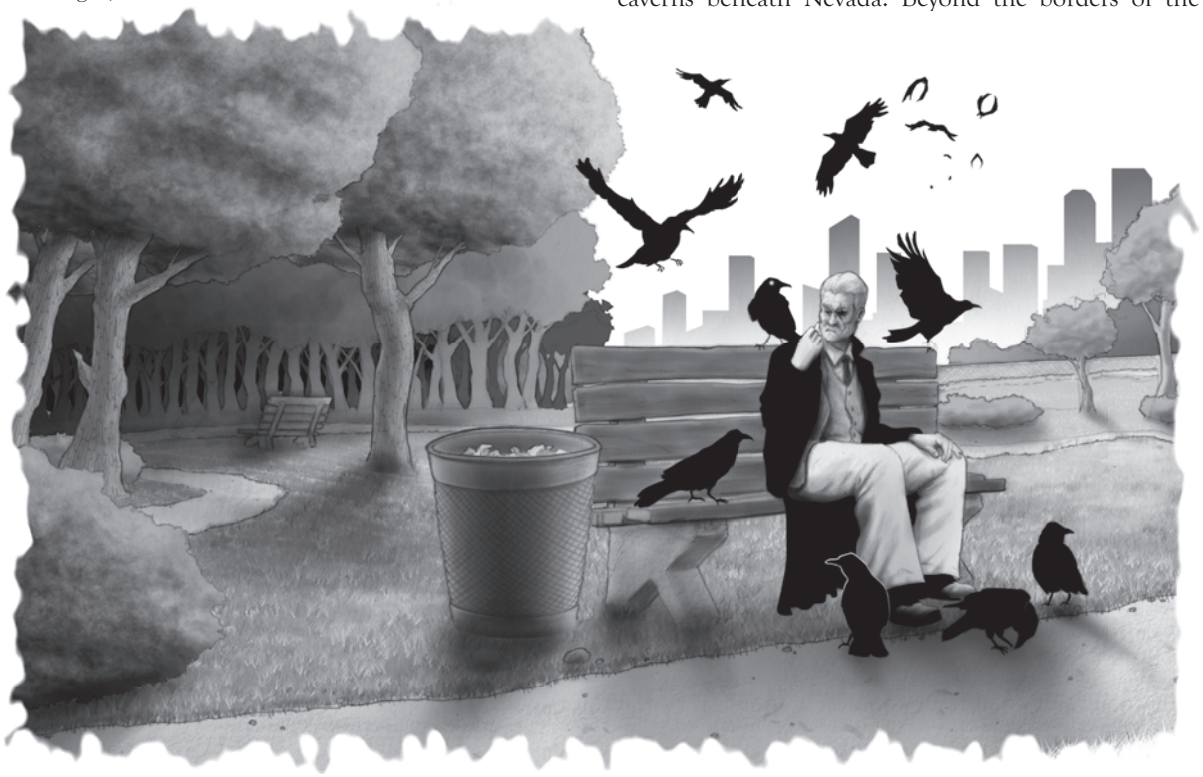
Another detail to consider when advancing the hiatus between "The Long Road to Heaven" and "The Ragnarök Gambit" is the characters' concluded duty in Las Vegas. The previous story assumes that the characters had nothing tying them permanently to Las Vegas, but that doesn't have to be the case. The Gods themselves leave Las Vegas after their closed-door meeting concludes, but if the characters found something they liked in the city or simply want to stay there out of convenience, that's fine.

If the characters choose to stay in Las Vegas, we suggest the following legendary encounters that can occur in the wake of their growing Legends:

• **Return of Tecuhtli:** While not a literal return of the creature the characters defeated to obtain the Black Feather Shroud, a creature similar to that Aztec-pantheon "earth lord" arises in the absence of the fallen one. Of course, this one's tougher. Perhaps it finds the now-empty lair on its own, or perhaps it bears some relation to the monster the Scions bested earlier and wishes to exact some sort of primitive vengeance (like Grendel's mother did). Whatever the case, an even more horrendous scourge of the desert is at it this time, and it's up to the characters to end its rampage.

• **Spawn of Titanspawn:** When the Scions fought Canopus on the top of the Stratosphere casino, drops of the great serpent's blood fell from the sky to the desert sands below. Okay, it's not really "desert sands," but actually the concrete and asphalt of the city streets below. As the spartoi of myth sprung up from the sown teeth of Ares' dragon, so too has a cadre of stony warriors emerged from the ground where Canopus's blood fell. These warriors made off into the desert under the cover of night (well, insofar as Las Vegas has a "night," what with the constant neon glow), and they attack the characters to pursue the slain serpent's wroth legacy.

• **Bat Country:** Unrelated to the Scions' previous exploits, a new threat has emerged from the sandy caverns beneath Nevada. Beyond the borders of the



city, the night now plays host to a particularly rapacious breed of vampire bat. Each is as large as a man and descends from the sky to drink dry local livestock, transient animals, and maybe one half-mad person all jacked up on peyote and unable to relate the story in any sensible way. Ranchers and animal control officers blame everything from coyotes to the chupacabra, but no one manages to catch more than a fleeting glimpse of the swooping black terrors that make their home in a cave out where Highway 582 fades into nothingness. This particular encounter is scalable, able to offer everything from a quick diversion to a full-blown crawl through the caverns that could rival the minotaurs' Labyrinth, complete with a blood-bloated hell-bat in the final chamber of the cavern. The bat-monster titanspawn themselves can hail from whatever pantheon the Storyteller chooses, from Aztec camazotz to Japanese koumoriyasha to descendents of Pandora's loosed misfortunes.

If the players' Scions want to leave Las Vegas, their exodus provides ample opportunity to incorporate some of the fruits of their increasing Legend, and also a few more chances to increase that Legend even further (for those lagging behind). The characters might decide to wander the World and see what it has to offer in the intervening weeks, or they might return "home," whatever their notion of the character's initial home is. In any event, this is one of those situations in which the exact details of the characters' journeys are going to provide better context and meaning than pre-scripted encounters devised on our part. Chapter Four of this book contains several locations that characters might visit on their epic travels. We also include the following to suggest a few ideas that might jump-start your imagination, but by no means do you have to use these ideas as dogma.

• **Drink from the Fountain:** If the characters' travels take them past a prominent river, lake or waterfall, that body of water might be infested with nymphs. Characters might hear of an unsettling increase in the number of local deaths involving the body of water, but none of the nymphs' wickedness leaves incriminating evidence, so the locals don't know supernatural critters are doing the killing. Rather, it simply appears that another water-skier drowned after being towed too fast, or a drunk fisherman fell out of his boat and sucked too much water, or some horny teenagers stole away to Make Out Falls and dashed their brains out on the rocks at the bottom. The nymphs cackle in their tinkling aquatic way, and all that's left behind is a waterlogged body that looks like the result of an accident. Suspicious characters—as if there were any other kind—will no doubt look into the anomalous increase in deaths and trace its cause back to the maliciously mischievous source.

• **The Colossus of Roads:** Perhaps the characters' journey leads them into a valley where a local highway construction project involves blasting through rock formations to make way for the road. A landslide of rock has closed the road, though, and the characters must investigate detour routes. In doing so, they talk to a local contractor who says that the crews must have been blasting day and night. Just yesterday, the rocks left behind by the dynamite blasting looked to be in the shape of a giant man, but now that's all gone and the road's full of stones. What really happened is that the excavation crews managed to unearth an enormous stone colossus, which broke free from its fetters in the night and went wandering off through the valley. The characters will need to find this stone troublemaker and reduce it to rubble before it does anything excessively destructive or jeopardizes innocent lives.

• **Terrae Incognitae:** A plethora of locations and story hooks can be found in Chapter Four, whether the characters are wandering adventurers or quiet local homebody-heroes. In fact, most of the terrae incognitae can be quietly shifted from their described locales in Chapter Four to wherever they make the best starting point for your cycle, with just a little bit of cut-and-paste work.

Some characters might wish to go to Reykjavik before the date Loki set for them. The story assumes that the characters will never even arrive in Reykjavik—it's just a red herring. As long as you're willing to shift on the fly a little bit, though, the characters' early arrival won't be a problem. We suggest three possible methods of handling this eventuality, and you should also be able to improvise a bit on your own if these methods don't quite fit your own cycle.

• **Turn the Clock Forward:** This is potentially the easiest fix. In this case, simply have the characters' journey to Iceland be diverted just as it is in Scene One of Act One. They'll never know the difference.

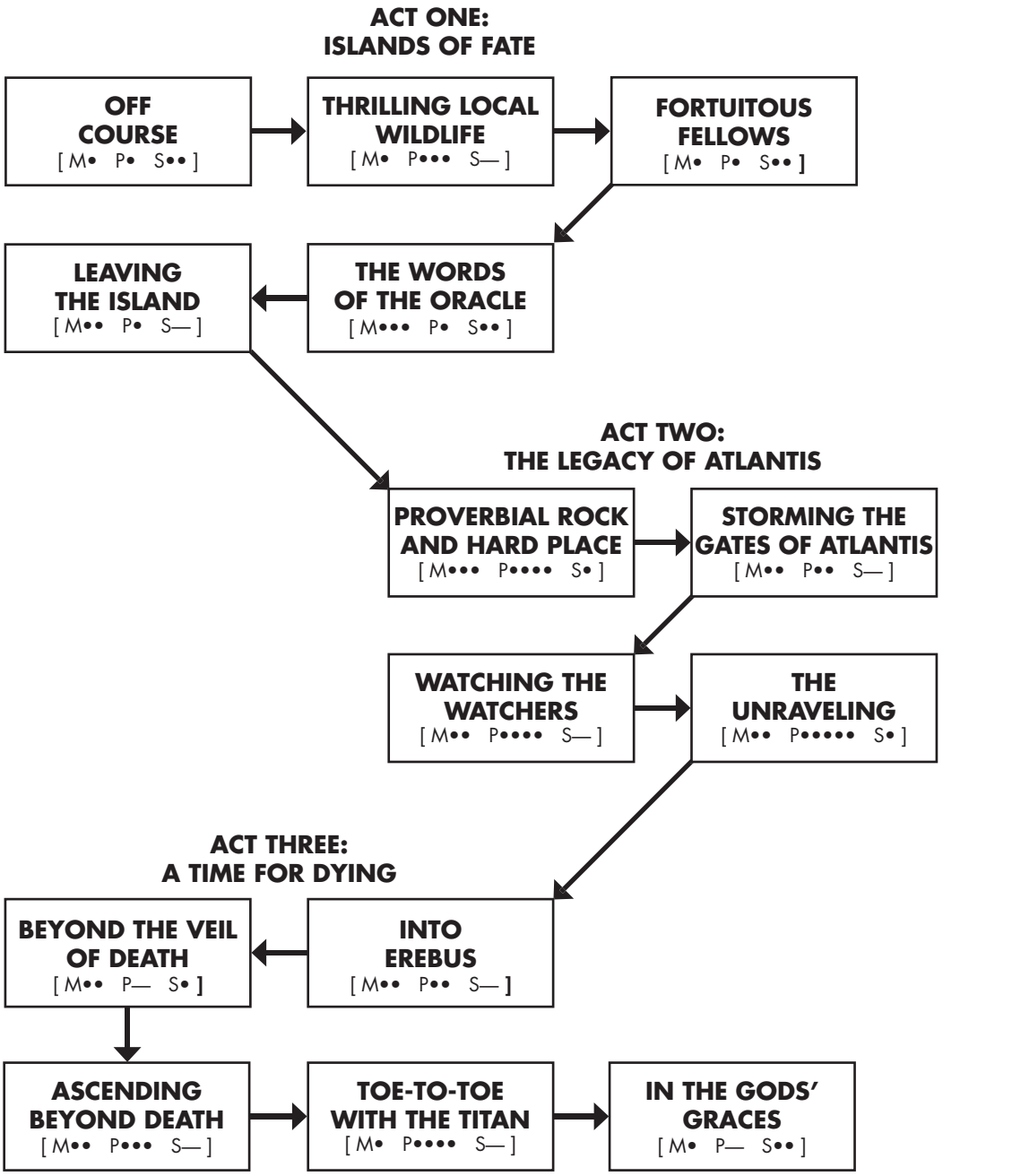
• **Looking For Loki:** If the characters get antsy waiting for word from Loki after the events of "The Long Road to Heaven" but before "The Ragnarök Gambit" officially begins, they might go looking for him. Just so you know, he's gone to Agwe's Palace (see pp. 120-122) near the coast of Haiti. There, he plans to take advantage of this disconnect from the Overworld and obtain a map to Atlantis without any of the Gods finding out. The characters might be able to find out where Loki has gone, though not why—only Loki could tell them that. As they board their vessel to try to get there and find out, though, that's when Fate takes over and diverts them to Aeaeae.

• **Building the Legend:** You might wish to create a mini-story in which the characters learn of Loki having retreated to an underground lair. What the lair actually is doesn't matter. It can be a safe house (since he's cut off from his Overworld bolt holes), a laboratory (where he's researching the Black Feather Shroud), or even another red herring (where Loki either was or wasn't,

but the characters are somehow led to believe he was). In any event, the journey to the lair is its own adventure, potentially involving a trek into the Icelandic wilderness, the depredations of hostile dwarfs or Vanir shadow-gnomes, and perhaps even a guardian wolf or wyrm. As the characters make their way through the underground tunnels leading to the lair, they find that it doesn't truly lead to Loki's lair at all, but rather emerges on the isle of Aeaeae itself. ("The hell...?") As they leave the tunnel, the characters find the exit behind them inexplicably blocked by rock, obscured by mist, or otherwise cut off from re-entry. At that point, they can progress into the story as normal, merely skipping the first scene as written.

THE RAGNARÖK GAMBIT

Scenes 14 [Mental •• Physical ••• Social •] XP Level 120–179


ACT ONE:
ISLANDS OF FATE
OFF COURSE
[M• P• S••]
THRILLING LOCAL WILDLIFE
[M• P••• S—]
FORTUITOUS FELLOWS
[M• P• S••]
THE WORDS OF THE ORACLE
[M••• P• S••]
LEAVING THE ISLAND
[M•• P• S—]
ACT TWO:
THE LEGACY OF ATLANTIS
PROVERBIAL ROCK AND HARD PLACE
[M••• P•••• S•]
STORMING THE GATES OF ATLANTIS
[M•• P•• S—]
WATCHING THE WATCHERS
[M•• P•••• S—]
THE UNRAVELING
[M•• P••••• S•]
ACT THREE:
A TIME FOR DYING
BEYOND THE VEIL OF DEATH
[M•• P— S•]
INTO EREBUS
[M•• P•• S—]
ASCENDING BEYOND DEATH
[M•• P••• S—]
TOE-TO-TOE WITH THE TITAN
[M• P•••• S—]
IN THE GODS' GRACES
[M• P— S••]

ACT ONE
ISLANDS OF FATE

This first act of "The Ragnarök Gambit" concerns itself with the sudden divine silence that has fallen upon the World. The players' Scions might have had some contact with their divine parents between "The Long Road to Heaven" and "The Ragnarök Gambit," but this story assumes that some period of time elapses during which the characters have tried to speak with their Gods and received only silence in return. Introduce this silence in whatever way suits your troupe. An action-oriented troupe might have a sudden, cliffhanger revelation that they can't speak to the heavens. A more intrigue-focused troupe might slowly perceive a sort of "breaking up" of the "signal" from the Overworld over the course of a few days. Whatever the method, make it obvious to the players that their characters aren't receiving any feedback from on high.

In the absence of that divine guidance and interaction, the characters recall that they have a pressing engagement with one of the Gods himself. This can serve as impetus on three levels. First, Loki specifically wanted to meet with the characters after the events of "The Long Road to Heaven" concluded. Since the Scions sweat for the spoils of that story, they're probably eager to reclaim their relic, or at least find out fully what it does and how they can better use it. Second, Loki's a God so he might know something about the disconnect between Here and There. Third, since Loki *is* a God, if he's even there in Reykjavik to meet them like he said he wanted to, that's at least a new piece of the puzzle to consider. What if Loki's the only God left? Did Ragnarök happen and the characters missed it? Any or all of these ideas should serve as adequate motivation for the Scions to hie themselves to Reykjavik when the call comes in.

Allow the characters to make any provisions for travel that they want. The most efficient mundane form of travel from Las Vegas (or the United States in general, or really any place that's not already in Iceland—and quite a few that are) is by air. More traditionalist characters, or ones who want to travel in relative secrecy, might choose a cruise ship or chartered sea vessel. Some characters might even wish to travel by less conventional means, or they might have access to special Birthrights that allow them to cover vast distances in little time. Any method they choose is fine, because they're never really going to get where they think they're going.

Scene
OFF COURSE
MENTAL • PHYSICAL • SOCIAL ••

Spend some time describing the details of the trip itself. Of specific merit are those mundane things that the children of the Gods should be above, but modern society forces them to endure. What's it like for a Scion to have to walk through airport security? How might a character explain a particularly archaic Birthright to a customs clerk? Saying, "Hey, don't drop that—Thor gave it to me!" could result in the Scion being placed on a number of interesting lists.

Don't simply dwell on the hassles, though. Praise the comforts of the trip, should the characters have opted for luxury. Even if they didn't, pick out a few key visuals to remind the characters of who they are and their heroic status. If they're in a plane above the clouds, suggest that this might be what it looks like to be in Heaven. If they took a cruise ship, point out the majesty of the vast ocean and the comparative majesty of hot chicks (or dudes... whatever) tanning on the top decks. In short, let them enjoy the trip after a few initial hassles.

Don't let the opportunity go by, though, to have them worry as much as they choose to about the absence of divine intervention. The characters should always have at least a mote of concern at the back of their minds, for the end of the journey promises new insight into the absence of the Gods, if not the actual answer itself. This probably has a different import for each of the characters—especially if you're using the pre-generated signature characters from Chapter One. (Imagine Dr. Tigrillo scribbling furiously on a yellow note pad about possible causes of the heavens' silence, while Donnie Rhodes discombobulates the pretty stewardesses up in First Class and Eric Donner gets drunk on the Coors Light he managed to buy from a flight attendant with a fake ID...)

As the Scions are getting comfortable, or indulging their characteristic discomfort, something weird happens. Of course, the characters should be no strangers to weird by now, but every time weird rears its ugly head, *something happens*. This time will be no different.

What that something weird is depends on the mode of travel. If the characters are in a plane, the sky turns stormy all of a sudden. If the characters are traveling by sea, their sun-drenched frolic is suddenly intruded upon by fog as

thick as pea soup. In either case, the travel staff suggests every person return to his seat or cabin, buckle his seat belt, if available, and await further instructions. What better way to encourage players to remain vigilant, or even go against the vessel's rules and check it out for themselves?

Before the characters can accomplish too much snoopery, and amid the worried whispers of the other passengers, a great thunder erupts...

...and that's it. The fog or clouds part, the sun comes back out, choppy waves or turbulence recedes. On a plane, the captain announces over the PA into the cabin, "Heh... That was just a little bit of rough air there and, uh, sorry for the discomfort but everything's fine now." On a ship, the crew and hospitality staff effectively receive that same message from their superiors and disseminate it among the passengers.

It becomes evident before long, though, that everything's not okay and that the brief storm must have blown them off course. The captain tells everyone that they've radioed ahead and the port or airport they expected to find wasn't there. Somehow, they've ended up in the Mediterranean (and furtive whispers occur over the PA between the captain and the first mate or copilot), and they're going to land or dock to figure out just what the heck went wrong.

The Mediterranean? The Mediterranean is nowhere near Iceland! By now, the characters' danger senses should be reaching top volume, as they've seen too much of this stuff to think that something like this *just happened*.

The news comes to the passengers, by PA or by crew, that the passengers won't be allowed to leave the plane or ship, because they're not cleared by customs to do so. Just bear with the crew; everything will be resolved shortly. At this point, the characters will probably be champing at the bit to figure out what's just happened, and no admonishment by any mortal with wings on his cap and polyester pants is going to stop them.

STORY SEED: PASSENGER REACTIONS

Something strange has just gone down, but once the players' Scions find themselves on the island of Aeaeae (see the next scene), things return to normal. Exactly how this situation rights itself has a number of potential explanations, each of which can serve as an interesting bit of metaphysical explanation, should the characters follow up once the whole mess is resolved.

• **No Harm, No Foul:** The passengers will never leave the plane or ship, so they'll never actually know where they were or what went wrong. They'll just assume that, yep, the vessel somehow came to port on some Mediterranean island, refueled and took off again. This will typically provoke a tirade about the imprecision of the travel industry, but since the passengers will have effectively ignored the mysterious development, they'll be none the worse for it happening.

• **The Mists of Fate:** In this case, what happens is that the characters only hear "the Mediterranean" because they're supposed to. Everyone else hears some rationalizing, sensible explanation because Greater Powers Than Them have dictated that they're not supposed to be clued in as to what's going on here. The mundane passengers on the vessel will hear "Newfoundland" or "Greenland" or even "the Faroe Islands." Again, since they won't have left the plane or ship, they'll just have the mutual hallucination that they went somewhere other than where the vessel actually made port… or *was it* actually a hallucination? Did the Scions actually disembark at a different place than where the vessel landed?

Whether the characters choose to sneak off the plane or ship, or brawl their way off the vessel, handle those actions as normal. You might wish to reward clever ideas with bonus dice, depending on how insightful the Scions' plans are. Remember, too, that any obviously supernatural actions the characters take could have the unwanted effects of Fatebinding (see p. 221–226 of **Scion: Hero**). As such, characters should probably play it safe, if for no other reason that they don't need a plane full of passengers tied to their destiny.

This scene concludes once the characters manage to extract themselves from the plane or ship.

Scene

THRILLING LOCAL WILDLIFE

MENTAL • PHYSICAL ••• SOCIAL –

As the Scions exit the plane or ship, they see the island for what it is, a Mediterranean oasis of seemingly paradisiacal wonder. The beach sands are fine, and crystalline water laps at the shores gently. As the Scions take in the beauty of the island, a curious sight greets them: A pack of wolves and a small pride of lions emerges from the thick wood bordering the beach. These beasts are docile but not domesticated, curiously examining the Scions, sniffing in their direction or licking outstretched hands. After a few moments of getting to know the Scions, both groups of animals wend their way back into the woods, stopping to look behind at the characters, encouraging them to follow. (To anyone who uses Animal Purview Boons to communicate with them, the beasts remark on the pleasantness of the weather, welcome them to "the nice lady's paradise" and comment on how nice it is to see more people so soon.)

The animals lead the Scions on a circuitous tour through the forest on a well-worn path, where the characters may wonder at the lush flora and abundant fauna of the island. The sun shines beautifully, dappling the forest floor as it falls between the leaves of trees. A soothing breeze blows through the forest as well, cool to the skin and tinged with the slightest hint of the sea's salt air.

As the animals bound ahead, they stop before they put too much distance between themselves and the Scions. Just before they get out of the characters' sight, they stop, attentive, ears erect, and wait for the characters to approach before leaping off through the forest again.

This goes on for a goodly distance, perhaps a quarter mile or so, before the Scions briefly lose track of the animals. It would seem that the lions and wolves went too far ahead. At least they have the path to follow, though.

If the characters follow the path, they'll eventually see the wolves again, though the animals' demeanor is very different. They seem restless, straying from the path in a circular route as if they were circling something in a clearing up ahead. Their ears are flat against their heads, and their bushy tails have dropped between their legs. If asked by one they understand, they say only, "Trouble is happening up ahead." Characters with acute sensory abilities will hear the sounds of battle nearby, or perhaps smell blood

on the air or even see brief bursts of activity that suggest some violent action is taking place just into the clearing ahead. Characters who chose to leave the path too will probably eventually see or hear these same telltale signs, as long as they kept moving in the same general direction as the path. (If they strayed from the path into the virgin forest, who knows what they'll find? The full information on Circe's island on pp. 108–110 has a few ideas.)

As the path comes to a clearing, the trouble is revealed. There's some sort of monstrous serpent down there, and it's engaged in a fight with a half-dozen individuals who must certainly be Scions themselves, given the strange relics they're wielding and the heavenly power they're demonstrating. The lions lie strewn about the clearing, some bearing horrendous, bloody gashes and the others lying in broken heaps telling of massive internal damage. The basilisk (for that's what it is) is obviously both the aggressor and some kind of titanspawn, as its hellishly glowing eyes and sheer savage viciousness attests.

The clearing itself is a glade in which the trees thin out a bit as the path widens to a circle, perhaps 50 yards across. Beyond the widened area, it doesn't seem as if the path leads any further into the forest. The whole clearing and abutting forestation lie in a sort of valley 30 feet below the promontory where the path from which the characters emerge opens onto the glade. The path leads down a steep incline, with a switchback halfway down the route.

If the other Scions see the characters, they call for help with a distinct note of desperation in their voices. If the characters don't intervene, the basilisk makes short work of the other Scions. Should the characters intervene, however, they'll have a fight on their hands and some earnest allies in the other Scions.

Traits for the basilisk can be found on pages 259-260.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Despite the fact that Circe is herself titanspawn, that doesn't stop the malignant energies of the encroaching Titans from occasionally seeping through and corrupting her domain as well. After all, it's not like the Titans compose an organized, unified front. They're largely a vast and wicked legion of self-interested tempests of awesome power, doing what they want, when they want to do it. Aeaeae is subject to the same incursions of titanspawn as the rest of the World, whatever Circe might have to say about it. It's not like the characters necessarily know that this is Circe's island, anyway.

To that end, one of the rents between the World and the realms of the Titans belched forth the loathsome basilisk, which just happened to make its lair near where this other Band of hapless (and comparatively minor) Scions was making its way. It's not a trap laid by Circe to doom the characters, nor is it an active ruse planned by any other entity. In fact, if Circe were aware of it, she'd probably be more than a little resentful of the intrusion into her demesne. (After all, if her ostensible titanspawn "allies" oust her from her island, she would be rendered powerless.) The Scions—those of the players and the lesser Band they just aided—were simply here in this primeval forest when Bad Things Happened.

STORY SEED: YEAH, WHERE IS CIRCE?

Although it's unlikely that the characters immediately know they've been mystically kidnapped to Circe's island, you know what's going on and might wish to introduce Circe herself more prominently than the story itself does. To this end, we offer these suggestions.

- **Circe is the Oracle:** In the interests of protecting her own interests (or origins, since the Scions wouldn't necessarily be inclined to trust her if they knew she was a titanspawn), Circe disguises herself as the Oracle who shows up in Scene Four.
- **Circe Replaces the Oracle:** If you don't want to use the Oracle as a vehicle for Circe's ruse, you may simply replace that character with the titanspawn herself. This matters only if you somehow reveal Circe's true identity. This doesn't alter the flow of the story much, but it does add a degree of intrigue to events. If Circe herself, a known titanspawn, is openly giving the characters information in Scene Four, the Scions will almost certainly wonder what her angle is, as aiding them actively works against the Titans' own plans. Can they trust her? If they don't, what other options do they have?
- **Replacing Fate:** If you truly wants to manipulate the events of "The Ragnarök Gambit," you may remove Scene Four entirely. In this case, Circe chooses to reveal the secrets the Oracle is listed as knowing, but she reveals them only in exchange for an intimate liaison with one of the male Scions. See page 109 for more information on Circe's motivation with regard to this course of action. Note also that this changes the tone of the story. The characters don't find the island as a result of Fate because the World wants to save itself. Rather, the characters are drawn to the island through Circe's sorcery, effectively adding a (minor) third party to the conflict between the Gods and the Titans.

Scene

FORTUITOUS FELLOWS

MENTAL • PHYSICAL • SOCIAL ••

In the aftermath of the conflict with the basilisk, the other Band of Scions offers effusive thanks for the help. Like the characters, these Scions found themselves brought to the island under inscrutable circumstances, but it happened while they were searching for a relic that was said to be able to pull the user through the Underworld and into the realm of the Gods. They needed this relic, they say, because they haven't heard anything from their own patron deities and they wanted to make the effort to go to the home of the divinities themselves to see what the cause of this lack of communication was all about.

Needless to say, the players' Scions will probably have a lot to talk about with this less experienced Band. To some degree, it should be comforting to know that someone else is having the same problems they are. Misery loves company, after all. This information, however, signifies greater problems for the World at hand. If it's not just the players' Band that's been having problems making contact with the Gods—if it's all Scions—that means something big is happening up in the Overworld, or is pulling the Overworld away from the World.

THE OTHER SCIONS

Full information on these young Scions can be found on pages 299–305. Feel free to power them up or down, as demanded by the abilities of the players' Scions or the minor Scions' need to depend upon the players' characters.

Much of this scene revolves around conversation, as it imparts a great deal of information around why the Scions are here. If your troupe enjoys the trading of information, you can extend this scene to allow your players as much interaction with the other Scions as they wish. If your troupe is more action-oriented, the players likely want to get the information and get going, so you might want to abbreviate the social discourse.

The other Scions openly share information with the players' Scions if asked, mostly out of appreciation for the help against the basilisk. They're good-natured about it and ask questions of their own. This is a good scene to impart a sense of accomplishment. The other Scions look up to the players' characters as more competent than themselves and seek advice from the players' Scions as to what life as a Scion is like, what misfortunes and promises it holds, and any experiences of their own they'd like to share. If the characters feel like it, let them tell a tale or two about their exploits. Indeed, a character who suitably impresses the Band of fellow Scions may even increase her own Legend. (Of course, this last occurs at your discretion. This is a convenient tool to help round out Legend scores for characters whose Legend lags behind a bit, and it's probably worth a bit of consideration, since they *did* just defeat the basilisk.)

Over the course of conversation with the new Scions, the players' characters learn that the Scions are searching for an oracle they suspect dwells here on the island. The curious thing is that, like the players' characters, they didn't know they were coming to the island. They've been here for two nights already, and on each night, one of them dreamed of speaking to a woman who turned into a man and vice versa many times during the dream-conversation. While neither of them remember what she said—in fact, they have a distinct impression of no actual words being spoken, but instead hearing a sound like a beacon or "a song whose singer wants to be found"—they both know it was the same figure. Intrigued, they want to find the real McCoy.

This might sound like hooey to the characters—or they might buy into it entirely—but the signs point to this mystic beckoning being the cause. If the players' Scions end up staying overnight, one of them has a dream similar to that of the lesser Scions, in which a man who turns into a woman and back again sings a song with words the character can't quite make out. The dream comes to only one member of each Band on a given night, but the details are so similar that those comparing the dreams will wonder as to whether it was actually a dream or a more straightforward message.

On a seemingly coincidental note, the characters might raise an eyebrow at the relic that the other Scions seem to be after. While nothing might necessarily immediately set them off, a bit of critical thinking could lead them to equate the object with the one they themselves found, the Black Feather Shroud. While the description isn't perfect, the object does, indeed, allow a roundabout way of going to the Overworld because it makes the wearer a God. As well, it has some connection to the Underworld because it can restore a dead person to life, or some semblance of it. Further, they're effectively seeking it too because Loki took it from them and hinted at giving it back once they visited him in Reykjavik. (Well, technically, Kane Taoka took it from them, but Loki took it from *him*.) The characters won't be able to come up with any definitive answers while stuck here on the island, but the whole situation should cause plenty of questions of similarity.

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Throughout this act, we use the words "isle" and "island" to refer to Aeaeae, Circe's island. That's out of convenience for ourselves. Note that the players' Scions and the Scions they encounter in this act won't necessarily actually know they're on an island. Interactions the players have with them should reveal this. Indeed, it's entirely possible that the first time the characters learn they're actually on an island and not lost on some greater continent is when they speak with the Oracle herself.

SEEKING THE ORACLE

At this point, the players will likely either want to join the minor Scions in their quest, or seek the Oracle out themselves. The latter might prove especially true if the characters come to believe that the minor Scions are trying to retrieve the Black Feather Shroud and want to get to it before they do. Only the first heroes to accomplish the quest gain the glory of the Gods, after all. There's no patron deity of Coming in Second.

At this stage, you can allow the Scions to find the Oracle's pavilion directly, or you can create a sub-scene of survival and exploration if you think the players would enjoy the complication. This search can involve puzzles, traps, hidden pathways or overt menaces. It could involve a physical conflict that only the aid of the minor Scions can help the characters overcome. Even the Gods have been bested by their own challenges, after all. It might simply be a way to make the players feel an encroaching sense of time being against them, as they trek through the trackless forest in hopes of finding an oracle they've only dreamed about and basically have to take on faith that he or she exists at all.

Whatever you decide, the players' Scions do eventually find the Oracle's camp. No matter which direction they head in, no matter what method they use to hunt the Oracle down, they will ultimately find her. That's why they're here, of course. Fate doesn't spend an inordinate amount of time jerking people around.

The Oracle's pavilion is in the center of a courtyard that used to be an aboveground tomb known as a tholos, which is now effectively a ruin. You can place the tholos in any location you please, either in response to the Scions' exploration, or as a specific locale at which you eventually want the players' characters to arrive. More information on the unique geography of Aeaeae can be found on pages 108–110.

STORY SEED: WHAT THEY'RE AFTER

If the players' Scions are somewhat nervous about these minor Scions searching for a relic that sounds perilously similar to the Black Feather Shroud, good on them. After all, they spent the time and effort to dig it up in the first place, and it wouldn't be right for just any Johnny-Come-Lately to have it fall into his lap. On the other hand, maybe your characters have done their part. Maybe the other Scions are supposed to be the ones who use it for its true purpose, or at least to keep it out of the hands of the Shinsengumi. Since your players' Scions aren't going to know what the Oracle tells the lesser Scions, they're going to have to find out for themselves, assuming they have the interest. As such, you have a few options available when it comes to the true purposes of the minor Scions.

• **They're After the Shroud:** Well, let's start with the big one. If they *are* after the Black Feather Shroud, it's probably because every God in his right mind who's heard of its appearance wants the thing and has at least one agent in the field looking for it. No doubt it comes with the admonishment, "And if you try to use it, it'll blow your face off!" to keep those agents from turning it to their own advantage. This raises the potential for a race among the Gods to see who can find it first (which is partially why the minor Scions have different patron deities than the assumed Gods who sired the players' characters). It might be that the Gods have a pact among themselves to obtain the relic and destroy it before some uppity Scion or true psychopath uses it against them. Alternatively, it could be that each God wants to keep the relic for himself, just in case some bizarre circumstance arises whereby he'll be able to gain some use or favor for having it in his possession. Remember, the Gods are often petty, and the exchange of the relic for another divine favor somewhere down the road is perfectly in keeping with their habits of heavenly brinkmanship. This probably also has the trickle-down effect on the players' Scions and the minor Scions, with a secret rivalry hiding beneath a surface amiability. In fact, the two groups might like each other, with the subtext on the players' characters' part being that they know they want to retrieve the Shroud before the lesser Scions, but probably won't, given that they have a greater duty.

• **Similar but Different:** The minor Scions are actually seeking a relic that has a function similar to that of the Black Feather Shroud but isn't the Shroud itself. If this is the case, it suggests that there are multiple relics out there with the ability to bestow godhead on their users. This could signify that a sort of divine "arms race" is going on. The Gods want to consolidate every item that allows people to steal divinity—likely because they're paranoid about anyone using them, but more likely, it's to keep them out of the hands of treacherous Titan-servants who would elevate themselves to apotheosis and strike down "true" Gods at the same time. With the impending war between the Gods and the Titans coming to a head, the Gods have their Scions all following up on leads that make reference to items allowing elevation to the status of Gods in order to protect them… or perhaps destroy them later.

• **Something Completely Different:** The minor Scions seek a relic that simply allows communication between the Overworld and the World. If this is the case, it suggests that the Gods knew what was coming when Mikaboshi first moved between the Overworld and the World. That means, since they already had their Scions in motion, they needed to be able to once again communicate with their children as soon as possible. While the arms race might not exist, the intensity of the race against time increases with this revelation.

HELP ALONG THE WAY

It doesn't happen every day that the Scions are presented with a Band of potential protégés. Some players might wish to enlist the aid of the minor Scions. That's fine and good, but bear the following considerations in mind. The lesser Scions are there to help, but they're just not (yet) on par with the stars of the cycle, your players' characters.

These are Scions with their own divinely charged duties and Fates. Therefore, while they respect the characters, they're really not interested in leading the players' Scions' headlong charge into bone-cracking doom, and they have their own private agendas they're trying to fulfill. They're the children of Gods too, and the Gods have designs on them. While the Scions are happy to lend a hand to the players' characters, or even perform an off-screen favor for them, they're not going to "scout ahead" or "see what kind of hell Ammit can dish out." If the players' Scions want to order a cadre of fools into certain death, let them get their own spartoi or myrmidons.

The lesser Scions work better in support roles than on the front lines because they're not able to go toe-to-toe with the players' Scions yet, and the challenges the players' Scions are going to face are scaled better to them than to the neophytes. Again, it's entirely feasible that one of the minor Scions might find a relic that one of

your players' Scions could use. One of them could even be a good, objective contact if one of your players made his own character and is a Scion of the same God as the minor Scion in question. (Siblings can certainly dish the dirt on mom and dad, after all.) The effort to prop the minor Scions up as full-time members of the players' Band just wouldn't be worth the investment.

To that end, these "support" Scions can take over a number of heroic trials the characters see fit to delegate to them. They're amenable to keeping in touch about their quest for the relic they seek, for example. If you want to charge the minor Scions with the eventual retrieval of the map to Atlantis so that the players' Scions can head directly down to Antarctica, that makes for a good story contribution too. The players might wish to ask the minor Scions to follow up on Loki as well, since it looks like they've just been tasked with something bigger than that for the time being. Any of these solutions and more can make for a solid, sensible working relationship between the two Bands. Of course, diplomacy is a good thing, because the players' Scions never know when these lesser Scions are going to show up again. (Hey... was that foreshadowing?)

Scene

THE WORDS OF THE ORACLE

MENTAL ••• PHYSICAL • SOCIAL ••

Once the characters have found the Oracle of Aeaeae, most of their task is done. She doesn't have them go through any elaborate rigmarole or any efforts to prove themselves. She's a vessel of Fate, after all—she knows these Scions are the ones she's after. She doesn't want to waste any time having them jump through hoops to satisfy any sense of self-importance.

Indeed, the Oracle is almost terse in her delivery of the information the characters need. Chalk it up to her not being a real human or Scion, and her infrequent contact with those same. People seek her out to have her impart some revelatory bit of information, not to chitchat. This quirk of socialization should occur to the players' Scions. Her demeanor should be serene but straightforward. She doesn't bother with empty pleasantries, but she does want to give the Scions as much as she can, and she wants them to succeed.

A silk pavilion occupies the center of the tholos where she waits, its panels swaying in the breeze. A few slim, mild servants mill about the area, dressed in short robes, collecting grapes from vines or pouring wine and water from decanters and bringing it into the tent. From their vantage at the top of the hill, the characters can see a pale figure reclining on a sort of chaise. The figure has long hair, and she occasionally waves at a servant for water or grapes.

Physically, the Oracle appears to be a teenaged girl. That initial impression is a bit misleading, however, as the Oracle is actually a hermaphrodite, which is revealed as she reclines in nudity on her chaise. (Not that the Scions will necessarily be looking for such things, of course, but if someone asks, there you have it.) The Oracle is also an albino, or at least severely deficient in pigmentation. This isn't a "skin like ivory" sort of deficiency, she's an unhealthful pink. Her eyes are clouded with cataracts, and she even appears to have bedsores. Ultimately, it should become evident that the Oracle is a poor physical specimen. She lies here, wracked by visions of Fate and attended to by those servants of Circe who treasure her in that role. Her frail body is too underdeveloped to walk, so she depends on those servants to feed her and address her other needs.

When the characters approach, she's no-nonsense, replying with "I know" to statements like "We were headed somewhere else and wound up here" or "We wish to speak to our divine parents." To these, she also replies with as much helpful information as she can. Remember, she's not arrogant, she just *does* know these things and wants to cut to the chase.

If the characters are in the company of the lesser Scions they aided against the basilisk, she asks that each Band speak to her separately. Each Band is entitled to know only its own Fate, she maintains. The lesser Scions acquiesce, assuming this to be the way of the Gods (or whatever). If the players' Scions insist on hearing the fate of the other Scions, or want those minor Scions to know their fate, the Oracle refuses to go on. She insists that the only one entitled to learn someone's fate is the one whose fate it is. If the characters wish to share that knowledge with other Scions later, that's their choice to make, and their act of sharing to engage. As an oracle, she simply doesn't have that power. (Savvy characters might also take some solace in the implication that their fate and that of the other Scions isn't intertwined, which might be interpreted to mean that the other Scions aren't actually after the Black Feather Shroud.)

In her conversation with the characters, she tells them the following information.

- Titanspawn across the globe are attacking the World's terrae incognitae, in an effort to destroy the Gods' allies and undermine their lines of supply and communication with their agents.
- The characters' visit to the island of Aeaeae was contrived by Fate. In light of the severed connection between the Overworld and the World, the characters are the agents of destiny who must stand up against the Titans' return by restoring communication between those two realms.

• Kane Taoka plans to raise lost Atlantis as part of his service to the Titan Mikaboshi. If he's successful, a series of volcanic eruptions will occur and churn millions of tons of dust and ash into the atmosphere. As if that weren't enough, the volcanic activity will cause the ice cap to melt, raising the global water level and drowning the World as the murk blots out the sun.

• Atlantis is located beneath the icy wastes of Antarctica.

• The characters can rectify the communications blackout, but only if they stop Kane Taoka from raising Atlantis first.

Storytellers should couch these revelations in the course of the characters' conversation with the Oracle. She doesn't just spew bullet points, but she'll effectively plead with the Scions to put an end to these horrible events as soon as possible. Depending on how heroic the characters' outlooks are, she might have to bargain with them.

Over the course of the conversation, the characters will almost certainly ask about the breach between the Overworld and the World. While the Oracle doesn't know anything specific about the metaphysics of this, she does know of a way to circumvent it. She describes to the characters the connection between the World and the Overworld, noting that, excepting the current circumstances, the Overworld usually connects directly to the World. Similarly, the Overworld and the World both connect to the Underworld. If the characters can successfully travel through the Underworld, they'll be able to get to the Overworld. It's a more circuitous route to travel than the direct ones, but since the direct ones are obstructed right now, there's no other option.

But how would one best get to the Underworld? There are many ways—Chapter Four shows plenty—but stopping Kane Taoka from raising Atlantis *must* take precedence. The Oracle pleads with the characters to understand this. Yet once they do, she tells them the quickest means of reaching the Underworld afterward is through a tunnel located in the heart of Mt. Erebus. Of course, Mt. Erebus—savvy Scions will note that the volcano is named after another Titan of darkness and shadow—happens to be located in Antarctica, as it's the World's southernmost active volcano. Once they reach Mt. Erebus, the Oracle tells them, they must "follow the path down until it travels down no further, and then go deeper."

The Scions' calling has now become a race against time. If Kane Taoka succeeds, the dust and ash blackening the skies will prevent much of the sun's light from reaching the World. Cutting off the World's sunlight will then chill the planet drastically, beginning the Norse Fimbulwinter, the prophesied forerunner of Ragnarök itself.

During their visit, characters may avail themselves of anything the tholos and its gardens have to offer. Its grapes are succulent, its wines potent, its waters invigorating. If the characters seek to take these items with them, they'll keep indefinitely, and each has a mythic benefit to those who consume them. The

STORY SEED: COMPLICATING THE QUEST

You might wish to extended this part of the story, turn up the tension now that success relies partly on time, or add difficulty to what is essentially a gift on the part of the Oracle. To that end, a few options become available.

• **Information Relay:** It might be that the Oracle doesn't know exactly where Atlantis is, but she knows where the map to Atlantis can be found. If this is the case, the Oracle directs the Scions to the Palace of Agwe (see pp. 120-122), thereby adding another leg of the quest to the story, as the characters will have to go there to retrieve the Atlantean map. (This, of course, assumes that the map is there and hasn't been stolen by Loki, as might have occurred in other situations described previously.)

• **Trial By Ordeal:** Groups of a more martial bent might enjoy a bit of conflict to keep their attention on the matter at hand. In this case, another God's squadron of myrmidons might be staking out the tholos, or might be searching for it, providing an immediate rival to be outmaneuvered or overcome. Alternatively, the myrmidons might instead be a pack of titanspawn sent to slaughter the Oracle so that she can't pass on her information. Only the timely intervention of the Scions can save her and her swooning servants from a bloodbath. If you exercise this option, though, you'd best have a back-up plan for imparting the location of Atlantis to the Scions, in the event that the titanspawn are successful.

• **Greek Tragedy:** You could say that the Oracle is on her deathbed when the Scions arrive. A steady diet of the garden's beneficent fruits has rendered her tolerant to them, and they no longer have the restorative effects on her that they have on others. In this scenario, the characters must retrieve a special flower or concoct an herbal poultice or some such that will revive the Oracle from her swoon. Once nursed to consciousness, she imparts her knowledge to the characters and dies shortly thereafter, her final purpose fulfilled.

grapes return one point of Willpower to any character who eats even one (though they may not return more than a single point of Willpower per scene in which they're consumed). The wine eliminates any mundane sickness afflicting the character who consumes it (not of much use to most Scions, sure, but the World doesn't revolve around them). The water restores a single point of lethal damage per scene in which it is consumed. Characters who overzealously stock up on the garden's delights "for later use" are looked upon as boors by the servants, though they take no measures to prevent such greedy harvesting.

Scene

LEAVING THE ISLAND

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL • SOCIAL —

With time working against them, the characters probably want to leave Aeaeae as soon as possible, in hopes of reaching Antarctica before Kane sets his apocalypse in motion. The Oracle agrees heartily. If the Band doesn't see the need for expediency, the Oracle pleads with the Scions to face down this threat with great haste, impressing upon them the fact that not just the World hangs in the balance.

The Oracle tells the Scions that a boat waits for them at the port where their ship docked (or near where their plane landed, or where the Rainbow Bridge Boon mistakenly transported them... whatever). The boat will take them to Piraeus, in Greece, where they'll be able to book passage to a larger city and, from there, head to Antarctica.

The boat itself is a very simple affair, little more than a dinghy, really, with a pilot who looks like one of the attendants at the tholos. The boat leaves port as soon as the characters are ready.

Unsurprisingly, the small boat makes use of the sort of mystical energy that diverted the characters to Aeaeae in the first place. Fog rolls before them and choppy waves toss them about. They're never really in any danger, but it seems that the World itself is doing what it can to make it difficult to be able to trace the way back to Aeaeae. Characters who have some degree of direction sense find that they're unable to discern exactly where they're headed, and may, in fact, receive contradictory information, feeling that they're headed west one moment and east the next.

As the sun rises, or sets (depending on when the Scions left the island), Piraeus comes into view. The pilot pulls the ship to shore and wishes the characters well, imploring them to do their best.

This scene exists primarily to give the characters a chance to plan their next move. It has no set end, as that's dictated by what the characters do. Optimally, the scene concludes as the characters are on a ship or plane to Antarctica.

STORY SEED: NOTHING'S THAT EASY

Complications often arise as the characters commit to a course of action, and this scene doesn't have to be any different. If you want to add a bit of conflict to the scene, we offer a few options.

• **Pirates of the Mediterranean:** As the characters are on their way to Piraeus, their small boat leaves the protective mists. When they emerge, they find themselves being chased by a corsair flying no recognized national colors. The bigger ship is faster than the Scions' meager boat, and even if they're better sailors than the servant at the tiller, they're probably not going to outrun the menacing vessel. The pursuing ship is a pirate's craft, and its crew wants to see if the little boat has anything worth taking. (The captain figures he can, at least, press gang the passengers into becoming pirates themselves.) Whether the pirates are mundane or somehow legendary themselves is up to the Storyteller, but either can work depending on the tone of the story.

• **Turncoat at the Tiller:** In this scenario, the Titans have corrupted the attendant assigned to guide the characters' boat to Piraeus. What he wants to do is waste a lot of time at sea, thereby giving Kane Taoka a bit of an edge over his would-be pursuers. This is a good complication for stories that focus on intrigue and the relationships between the Gods and Titans, because it's a little more difficult to discern than a pirate or monster attack. The Scions really have no idea how far they are from Piraeus, so it's probably going to take them a little while to become suspicious, let alone act against the seemingly innocuous pilot. Even when they do finally figure that he's basically been sailing them around in circles, what are they going to do with him? This complication could easily become a survival scenario requiring some clever attempts to withstand starvation and exposure, or it could simply remain an intrigue, after which the pilot takes them where he's supposed to after being called on his evil ruse.

• **Waylaid By Water:** Oceanic piscine titanspawn take the opportunity to follow the craft as it makes its way across the sea. Once the mist abates, they leap aboard, trying to tackle one or more of the Scions and drag them into the depths. Get it? A-*baits*? Tackle? Oppor-*tuna*-ty? Fish attack?

Yeah, *anyways*…

TAKING STOCK OF THE SITUATION

Before heading into Act Two of "The Ragnarök Gambit," take quick stock of where the Band's attentions lie. Don't be caught moving forward, expecting to go to Atlantis, and then find yourself blindsided by the players telling you, "We're all packed up and ready to head to Reykjavik now that this fruity island has given us everything it has to offer." You have a variety of tools at your disposal to keep your players' Scions directed at the greater threat. If you have any doubts as to where the players might steer the action next, indulge one or two of these devices.

THE OTHER SCIONS

If it'll keep them headed in the right direction, encourage the characters to enlist the aid of the minor Scions in making their meeting with Loki. This is a great way to empower the players' characters for multiple reasons.

• It allows them to delegate a degree of authority. As the ranking Scions in the situation, they'll appear as having given a strong bit of advice to the minor Scions. After all, what they're seeking sounds a lot like what the Black Feather Shroud actually does, so they're effectively passing on a strong lead. They all work for the same side, anyway, even if that side is fractious and self-aggrandizing.

• It allows them to both be seen as magnanimous and harvest the greater glory. While they pass on the information regarding Loki and Reykjavik to the minor Scions, they're being charitable and helpful. Then they head down to Antarctica and—hopefully—kick the crap out of Kane Taoka and foil his plan to raise Atlantis. Which course of action will net them more Legend? "We went to Reykjavik and found this stinky old raggedy bird-cape" or "We went to Atlantis and saved the whole damn World"?

• It allows them to thumb their noses at Loki. Sure, that's a kind of petulant motivation, but it's the way the Gods play their games. It's effectively saying, "Yeah, Loki, we're too busy to catch up for that thing we talked about, but here, you can talk to some of our people." The characters will have effectively blown off one of the preeminent Gods of one of the most powerful pantheons, and that takes massive sack. Sure, it'll earn them Loki's ire, but he was probably just going to stab them in the back anyway, and it's looking increasingly like he's not playing by the same rules or code of honor that the other Gods are, anyway.

You know what? Screw that guy.

THE ORACLE

Depending on how you incorporate her into a scene, the Oracle can serve as a subtle or overt beacon to putting the characters on track. Now that she's met with the Scions—since they've been to the island—her ability to contact them no longer relies on their being in her presence. She can visit them in dreams. The Oracle visits only one character of a given Band per night, to make sure her singular visitation has the most possible impact.

Dream visitations work best when they're hazy, imprecise things full of allegory and symbolism, just like real dreams. If the Oracle were able, she'd just thunder into somebody's head while he's asleep and scream, "You're headed the wrong way, knucklehead!" Dream-divination (oneiromancy, in the Oracle's native etymology) relies upon both the mind of the dreamer and the will of the medium. At least, that's how **Scion** assumes it's going to work in the case of the Oracle and the Scions she visits. The Oracle can only take part in what the Scion dreams. She can't drastically change the dream environment or derail the dream with some heavy-handed imagery of her own.

As such, the messages the Oracle leaves in each character's dreams are cryptic, haunting and invariably inflected by whatever it is you deem the character is dreaming about. If the Scion dreams of wandering among the headstones of a cemetery in the company of Baron Samedi, for example, the Oracle might appear in that dream in the guise of a restless spirit who needs to be shown the way to the afterlife. When the character looks at the "spirit," he recognizes the Oracle's face. Perhaps the character has a dreaming vision of *The Birth of Venus*, but instead of Aphrodite being born from the clamshell, it's the Oracle. The key is to tie the character's divine patronage with the Oracle's appearance, thus making a connection between the character's divine duty and the Oracle's instructions.

Obviously, in neither of these examples does the Oracle come right out and tell the characters where they need to go or what they need to do. Her presence simply serves as a reminder that she told them something... and perhaps that she's checking in on them. When the characters get themselves moderately back on track and headed toward Antarctica, the dreams stop and the Scions may once again sleep peacefully.

If that doesn't work, turn down the symbolism and turn up the urgency. Perhaps the Oracle-ghost drifts southward in the graveyard dream. Maybe the clamshell floats off to the south.

EXTERNALITIES

As always, the life itself can offer hints and clues as to what the characters must do to set things right. For example, while they're on their way, doing whatever wrong thing it is they're doing that necessitates a little gentle nudging, the characters might read a newspaper story about worrisome activity in a volcano (particularly if they're still in Greece, or at least the Mediterranean). That should spur the characters' minds into thinking, "Oh, yeah, I'm supposed to go check out a volcano in Antarctica." It becomes significantly less veiled when you have newsworthy volcanic activity occurring at Mt. Erebus itself. It takes on all the subtlety of a frying pan to the head if you have Mt. Erebus erupt while the character's lying in bed in his hotel room in Reykjavik watching a B-movie entitled *Hella Terrors of Mt. Erebus*.

Other bits of information can remind the characters of the importance of Antarctica as well. An explorative diving expedition in Antarctica might yield evidence of the scientifically dubious zeuglodon (see Act Two) or discover a species of fish heretofore considered extinct. Such fish, continually existing in the depths of the water further than any men have explored to date, have actually been displaced by the activity in Atlantis. No one would ever know that through the simple rediscovery of a fish, however.

A plane might have veered off course while en route to Antarctica and been forced to land in Tierra Del Fuego or some such, amid tales of freakish storms. This should certainly strike home with the players' Scions and encourage them to check out some of the freaky stuff that's obviously happening down there, in addition to the rest of the World.

In the end, the only restriction you have on the subtlety and function of your reminder events is the fact that the causes need to be kept out of the public eye. The World isn't yet ready for the penultimate announcement that the Old Gods are back and there's about to be an almighty Ragnarök-concert happening with the very survival of the universe as the stakes. That comes later.

SEQUENCING

It's also important to make sure the players know the order in which events should be taking place. Unless you are supremely adept at shifting on the fly, players' taking things in their improper order can put the kibosh on the cycle's proceedings. That's not to say you simply must run the story as it's written here. If you want, you can rearrange the entire cycle to your heart's content. The events as written flow chronologically from one to the next, however.

Be sure the characters know that meeting with Loki falls to a distant third on their agenda. While it was originally at the top of the list, much more pressing events have surfaced that require their attention. (In fact, Loki would prefer if the players' Scions kept their original date, as it would mean Kane Taoka was down there in Atlantis, rampaging around unchecked and starting the first stage of Ragnarök that Loki desires. That was Loki's plan from the start.)

Now as their first priority, the Scions need to foil the plot of Kane Taoka and his rogue Scions in Atlantis. Sure, it's entirely possible for the characters to leap into Mt. Erebus and go into the Overworld through the Underworld first, but that will present two obstacles. For one, it again leaves Kane Taoka and his cronies to have their way with Atlantis. It would be a distinct anticlimax for the characters to slog their way through the Underworld only to have the Gods tell them, "While you dopes are fooling around up here, Kane's starting the Fimbulwinter back in the World!" The other complication is that it undermines the plans of the Gods themselves and makes it distinctly unlikely that Kane will thereafter follow the characters into the Underworld. Remember that the Gods actually *want* Kane to go to the Underworld and attempt to reach the Overworld. It's part of the plan.

If the players are dead set on heading into the Underworld first and then dealing with the Atlantis issue later (presumably once they've talked to their divine parents), all is not lost. While Kane almost certainly succeeds in raising Atlantis, you can instead switch gears and decide that the sunken city takes time to rise, thereby giving the Scions a chance to return and stop the mechanism, or whatever pseudoscientific or arcane delay you choose to impose. Getting Kane to the Underworld might thereafter prove problematic, since all he really has to do is wait for Atlantis to ascend.

In this case, the Gods will probably salvage things by telling the players' Scions about their plan to trap the Titans via Kane. With this revelation, the Scions will have to go back to the World, cease the (by fiat delayed) raising of Atlantis, then scamper once again into the Underworld, hoping to tempt Kane into following them.

And there you have it. It's not *too* difficult to change direction and salvage the story line if the characters play their hand out of turn. All it takes is a little backward compatibility rewriting.

STORYTELLER'S TOOLBOX: SET IT FREE

Alternatively, you might wish to see where the players want to head and then rework the story from that angle. If you're up to a rewrite of this caliber, good for you. It's a matter of fact that players dislike being railroaded toward an outcome they think is inevitable. Nonetheless, it's impossible to build an adventure or story line that's wide open, because you simply can't account for the potentially infinite number of things the players might decide to do. Remember, there's a difference between railroading and a well-defined story arc. Railroading means that the results are inevitable. Regardless of what the players do, they're going to achieve the same outcome. This is often the mark of a Storyteller who is either excessively proud of his created story or who lacks confidence in his improvisational abilities, so he sticks with the script regardless of what happens. Storytelling, however, builds creativity and increases one's ability to make decisions on demand. The more you improvise, the better you'll become at guiding the story organically and not hammering it into the pre-written direction.

What we're assembling here for you are essentially guidelines, so use them as you will. We have an overarching story we're telling via **Scion** that involves your input. If you decide at any point that you want to diverge from our planned story and take it in your own direction, go on with your bad self.

ACT TWO
THE LEGACY OF ATLANTIS

Armed with the knowledge that Kane Taoka plans to raise sunken Atlantis and call upon its dormant legacy to melt the polar ice, the Band hopefully makes haste for the ice-locked city to thwart him. Getting there is not the easiest thing to do, however. Then, once the characters arrive in Antarctica, they're going to have to worry about logistics such as exactly where the city lies beneath the seas, how they're going to breathe once they get there and how they're going to negotiate the perils of ice and sea while finding Kane.

Wise characters will consider these logistics before they head into the depths. It's easy enough to procure cold-water scuba gear or maybe some magically powered diving apparatus, but what about finding the city proper? It's one thing to know that Atlantis is somewhere beneath Antarctica, but that's a lot of land and sea to cover. With that in mind, here are a few methods to get the Scions to the right place:

• **A Map:** As discussed before, the Palace of Agwe contains a map to Atlantis. If the Storyteller wants to make this sort of side-adventure a part of the story, details for that structure can be found on pages 120–122.

• **An Expeditionary Force:** The characters may choose to seek out Atlantis on their own, particularly if the troupe is one that enjoys exploration and learning the secrets of the unknown. This is a great way to delve into the wonders of the mythological world, sorting out the puzzles and premises of lost civilizations like a Band of divinely ordained Heinrich Schliemanns. It's not without its complications, though, as the threats of Fatebinding prevent such research expeditions from truly proceeding with the scope of more mundane archaeology. Still, with a handful of talented Scions and perhaps a cadre or two of devoted spartoi, zombies or myrmidons, a thrilling exploratory side-scene can certainly occur.

• **Captain Nestor:** A brave sea-captain-for-hire who refers to himself only as Captain Nestor may be found wherever you choose to place him, logically where the characters begin their earnest search for a method of going to Antarctica. He's somewhat similar to the Oracle at Aeaeae in that the characters come to his attention because of their Legends. The captain is sort of a legendary figure himself, though he's not a Scion or titanspawn or any such thing. He's effectively a "heroic mortal," an individual brought somewhat into the mysteries of the Gods to fulfill a prescribed purpose, as Jason and a number of his famed Argonauts were. (In fact, Nestor is the name of one of the Argonauts, if you'd like to imply the captain's descent from that mythological figure.) With that in mind, the characters find Captain Nestor a willing and exceptionally insightful steward of his own ship, the *Eurydice*. Nestor understands the great duties that occasionally come to men, and he's not afraid to face a trial or hardship, even if he doesn't quite know what the stakes are on a divine level. The story assumes that Captain Nestor helps the characters arrive at Antarctica and Atlantis. If the Scions choose some other method of reaching Atlantis, be prepared to make a few minor changes to the events of the story as written.

THE SEAL OF ATLANTIS

Seals of Atlantis are relics left over from the period when Atlantis thrived as the Isle of Atlas, beyond the Pillars of Hercules. They aren't relics in the "magic item" sense, but rather the "manmade objects of historical interest" sense. The seals themselves might be any odd tool or ornament that just happen to be marked with the symbol of the city.

The seals at one time identified denizens of the city as such. Today, they're mostly of archaeological curiosity, though to certain creatures beneath the waves, they bear an almost holy significance. For example, the warped Atlantean soldier elites who live in the ruins (see pp. 201-203) revere the symbol, for it stirs something primal in them, reminding them of times before they were the forsaken individuals they are now.

Characters making their way through Atlantis can find objects bearing the Seal of Atlantis practically anywhere, though it's up to them to experiment and see who recognizes them and who doesn't. The seals might be left in ruins of homes in Atlantis, worked into jewelry around the necks of corpses found in the sunken city, frozen into submerged ice floes that drift by or among caches of treasure or other troves.

They don't have a huge impact on the story. They're just proto-heraldic devices that give a sense of civilization lost. Use them or ignore them as you see fit.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The details probably won't come into play, but it's good to know exactly what's going on here, otherwise the events of this and future acts can seem exceedingly random and arbitrary. It's okay if it seems that way to the characters, but if you have to improvise, it's best to know the background.

The reason Kane Taoka knows where Atlantis is lies with Sly Guiler, who owes his information to Loki. Loki believes that, if Kane raises Atlantis, the resultant global chaos will be the spark that ignites Ragnarök. Kane doesn't necessarily care about Ragnarök proper, he just cares about killing his mother Amaterasu. If raising Atlantis causes "the fate of the Gods" as the most direct route toward that, he's all for it.

What the players' Scions won't have seen, is that Kane came up with the idea but Sly has been doing most of the legwork, such as finding secret routes to Atlantis, gathering information on the ritual necessary to raise it et cetera. (Your characters might be able to extract this information from various details or even interrogations with Scions captured at the end of the story.) Sly doesn't question why Loki's provided him with information like that, and Kane certainly doesn't bother to look for the devil in the details. Both are part of something larger than they realize. If they did know the truth, however, it's unlikely that it would have changed their course of action. Loki simply doesn't see the need to keep his son apprised of what his own choices and motivations are. If Mikaboshi's motivations are even readily discernable on a level beyond a creeping malevolence, they're certainly not sensible to anyone other than Kane.

Further, the only other member of Kane's Band who knows that Taoka's in thrall to a Titan is Orlanda Elliot. Depending on what serves your needs, Seth Farrow might suspect something as well. If he does suspect, though, he probably doesn't give a damn, as long as he has the chance to sow misery. The other three members of Kane's Band have no clue that they're working for the pawn of a Titan. They would either leave his employ or actively turn against him if they knew the truth. That all depends on their individual temperament, too. Sly would likely flee. Marie Glapion would leave and try to enlist outside aid to help correct her mistake. Victor... well, Victor would probably try to bring Kane down himself. These eventualities might arise over the course of the story and are discussed individually in scenes where they might have the most impact.

Scene

THE PROVERBIAL ROCK AND HARD PLACE

MENTAL ••• PHYSICAL •••• SOCIAL •

Booking passage to Antarctica isn't as extreme as it sounds. While it might be misleading to say that tourism thrives in Antarctica, tourist ships do indeed travel to the region. Most such ships are icebreakers or scientific vessels converted into passenger ships, and tours to the region are more of the informative sightseeing expedition variety than they are singles cruises with a supporting cast of singing, dancing penguins that crack wise like Robin Williams. Tourism packages to Antarctica cost from around $3,000 to $10,000-plus, and vary in quality by price. You get what you pay for, and even a Scion wouldn't be the first person to die freezing of exposure down there.

Only the phenomenally rich might be able to book private passage to Antarctica, as there really aren't facilities that handle more mainstream visitations. Nonetheless, these are the children of Gods we're talking about, and it's entirely possible that they have the wealth of nations at hand. That doesn't solve all of the problems, however. The only communities in Antarctica are scientific operations run by various governments, none of which cater to casual visitors. Likewise, none of them will take seriously any claims that a group is searching for Atlantis. If the character who's trying to arrange an Antarctic visit seems strange and eccentric enough, the scientific community might sublet some space at facilities like McMurdo Station in exchange for a big enough endowment. There's no harm in turning an amusedly blind eye to the crazy rich people who think they're going to find Atlantis.

As well, a character with significant military connections might be able to procure an assignment to Antarctica, under "protective" or "military research" pretexts. This would make the region a little more accessible and potentially allow a more immediate voyage. A military ship in the region, for example, could serve as a helipad for authorized expeditions.

Characters without dump trucks full of money or wearing five stars on their epaulets are going to be hard-pressed to get there, though. That's the reason we suggested using a heroic mortal such as Captain Nestor. Nestor certainly runs a no-frills operation, but he's also adept at guiding his ship through waters where he's not supposed to be. His small crew is loyal and tight-lipped, comprising a dozen motley sailors probably on the lam from various agencies and organizations around the World. A bit of research into Antarctic passage should turn up this dodgy-but-dependable captain, perhaps involving a brief scene in which the characters meet with him and see the ship that can be as humorous or ominous as you want to make it. Nestor has the whole trip planned out, with the first leg of the trip consisting of the journey from (wherever the characters find the good captain) to Punta Arenas, on the Strait of Magellan in Chile. The second leg, about 900 miles, will bring the characters to the Antarctic coastline.

However the characters manage to get to the Antarctic region, the hassle proves to be only the most mundane hazard. Darker forces are arrayed against them and will soon make themselves known.

THE GAUNTLET

Just as Odysseus had to sail his vessel between the twin horrors of Scylla and Charybdis, so too will the characters' voyage take them between a pair of titanspawn who are dead ringers for those sea menaces themselves. This encounter occurs as the characters are on the final part of their voyage.

In the old legends, the perils of Scylla and Charybdis were that the farther a ship sailed away from one, the closer it came to the other. When Odysseus faced them, he chose to sail closer to Scylla—a six-headed sea-serpent that would eat six of his men—than to Charybdis, for that monstrous whirlpool might have sunk his entire ship. Odysseus knew that he was dooming six men to their deaths, but this risk was a safer course than potentially losing every man on his ship.

The Scions don't have the luxury of this warning, however. One night on the voyage, when the seas are deeply foggy, a call comes out from the ship's navigator. There's something big and unexpected up ahead off the port side. Nothing's on any of the maps that shows an obstruction there, but the sonar's picking up something.

No problem, the captain says. Eight degrees to starboard should steer the ship wide of it, and someone on deck can take a look. Check the radio for an SOS call, first mate.

Nothing on the radio. The ship moves to starboard...

...and the navigator says that something else is ahead to starboard. Something else that's not on the maps.

Sweep wide again, the captain instructs, but that turns out to be no good. Something's pulling the ship forward. It won't be able to turn around or even move to a safe distance before whatever's causing this current pulls it into one or the other. One or the other of *whatever's out there*, that is.

At this point, the experience of mysterious forces waylaying them should either make the hair on the Scions' necks stand up or drive them directly into, "What are we going to do now?" mode.

The captain turns the decision over to the characters. After all, it's their expedition, and they certainly have a better idea of what threats might be posed than he does. Sure, they don't necessarily, but all the captain can do is steer the ship, and even that amount of ability has effectively been taken away from him.

A trip topside reveals the true monstrosity of the situation. To starboard floats what looks like a derelict oil derrick, from which flail a number of tentacle-arms that glint like steel and... exposed muscle? The creature itself is easily as big as the ship. To port, things don't get any better. Twice again as large as the looming oil derrick is a churning whirlpool, from which a keening wind emanates. Scions peering over the side of the ship can see that the inexplicable whirlpool descends deep into the sea, beyond the point their angle of vision will allow them to see. It's enormous, and it seems to be moving. Obviously, it's these two malignant entities that are drawing the ship forward.

With steely calm, the captain asks again, "Which one?" They're going to pass within a hair's breadth of one or the other. The captain's not such a fool that he thinks he'll be able to handle the hazards by himself, but he's got a strong sense that his passengers have some mettle to them to which he hasn't yet borne full witness. Assuming you're using Captain Nestor and the *Eurydice*, he's surprisingly unfazed by the dire straits his ship is in—and the fact that there are ravenous sea monsters flanking it on both sides! A more mundane ship's captain would probably be hysterical instead of stoically resigned.

If anyone has the presence of mind to check the map of Atlantis's location (if the characters indeed collected a map of some sort), they'll find that this is the general vicinity in which the sunken city is marked to occupy. They're in the Drake Passage. *Ominous!*

INTO THE BREACH, AND BENEATH THE WAVES

Traits for Scylla and Charybdis can be found on pages 266–267. Although the titanspawn the players' Scions encounter aren't the namesake Scylla and Charybdis, they're obviously sent by the Titans into the World to serve the same purpose, so we treat them as eponymous here.

Naturally, it's these twin oceanic terrors that are pulling the ship into their sway. Don't bother codifying this force with game effects or traits. Their pull exists to force the characters to make the same choice Odysseus made on his return to Ithaca. Given that the portion of "The Ragnarök Gambit" that occurs prior to the Scions finding Atlantis is this cycle's version of the *Odyssey*, that's certainly appropriate.

Similarly, tactics for dealing with these sea fiends can be found on those pages, with a few additional suggestions here. While Scylla is fairly straightforward, Charybdis is a bit more complex. ("You want to fight the *whirlpool*?") As titanspawn, both of the creatures will fight to the death, and will even pursue the *Eurydice* (or another vessel) if it's somehow able to evade their pull.

Conduct the battle as dictated by the rules, but split the attention of the monsters between the Scions and

the *Eurydice*. The monsters' actual tactics are to keep the Scions at bay for as long as possible, focusing their true energies upon the destruction of the ship. Thereafter, they reason, they'll be able to mop up and chow down on any sailors or mariners who were tossed overboard at their leisure. They don't really recognize the Scions for what they are, but that's more because they're raging forces of nature and animal instinct than because they're stupid and ignoring the Scions' efforts against them. They're more cunning than truly intelligent, anyway.

Ultimately, unless the Scions defeat them with profound alacrity, the monsters will twist, pierce or otherwise mangle the hull of the ship, dragging it down into the chilly sea and pulling the hapless Scions, sailors and captain with them. Allow the Scions to continue their battle with the beasts as they splash into the cold water, and also allow them to salvage any diving gear they might have thought to bring aboard. Maybe they even manage to salvage an inflatable Zodiac boat, giving them a desperate vessel from which to continue their fight. (Zodiac is the brand name of the inflatable boats, but you might be able to plant the line "The zodiac will bear you to Atlantis," or something similar, as foreshadowing earlier in the story—whether it's in the Oracle's prophecy or in some other mythic revelation.)

In the end, even if the Scions win by defeating the physical threats posed by the sea monsters, their ship is sunk. If Scylla survives the encounter, each of its tentacles should grab a Scion and pull him beneath the waters. If Charybdis survives, its thrashing waters will pull any capsized Scions beneath the waves as well.

These actions are likely the monsters' death-throes, but they're also the characters' tickets to Atlantis. As it turns out, these mythological horrors were placed where they were because they were there to guard the sunken city's location. Kane doesn't want to mess around with some research vessel full of college students on an exploratory trip or some hapless icebreaker finding the geological mass of a city that's not supposed to be there beneath the surface of the water. They'd just go back to civilization and say, "Hey, check this out," thereby bringing the sunken city to the World's attention and thus Fatebinding Taoka and his Scions to everyone who felt like heeding the scientific discovery. Kane's plan was to have Scylla and Charybdis simply swallow up anyone who ambled obliviously into their proximity and let the World chalk it up to an accident at sea or something akin to the Bermuda Triangle (only farther south).

Of course, Kane had no indication that those obnoxiously competent Scions who got the better of him in Las Vegas would show up at Atlantis's front door. When they defeated his minions, they accidentally found their way directly to the one place he didn't want them to be. The worst part (for him and his Band) is that while the Shinsengumi prowls around the depths trying to find the mechanism by which to raise the submerged city, the Band doesn't even know the heroic Scions are there. If this lousy situation even has an upside, it's that the players' Scions don't actually know they've effectively taken Kane by surprise yet. That might have been their intent. Since Kane didn't oppose them directly at Aeaeae, they might have surmised that he's continuing with his plans in the belief that they don't know what he's up to. Since they ran afoul of his sentries, though, they might assume that he's now on to them (despite the fact that he's really not).

Effectively, by the end of the scene in which the characters deal with Scylla and Charybdis, both Bands of Scions are engaged in a standoff, though it's one in which neither legitimately knows of the other's presence or abilities. The players' characters truly have the upper hand, but they don't know they do and likely assume that they're caught flat-footed because of the sea monsters' ambush. What they do next and how they resolve the impasse is up to them.

SAVING CAPTAIN NESTOR

Although it's by no means critical to the plot for Captain Nestor to survive the shipwreck, it might be worth it to somehow have the fortune-favored sailor escape. He might show up in a later scene of the story, or he could even be in charge of the next vessel the characters take in their travels.

This development can be played either for laughs or as a symbol of divine power, depending on the tone you've set for your cycle. Captain Nestor might turn up again and again, a veritable Jonas who emerges unscathed from disaster after disaster, most of which come as a result of having the Scions aboard his ship, yet somehow never bearing them ill will for it. Alternatively, he may prove to be a mysterious X-factor, a peculiarly charmed "legendary mortal" who survives through divine providence that the players' characters never witness directly.

All of this, of course, assumes that you want to bother with making Captain Nestor a recurring support character in your cycle. If you don't, he simply dies beneath the sea with the rest of the *Eurydice*'s crew.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

You might want to consider adding a few details to spice up the scene. This section mentions a few of these minor touches that can add a little bit extra to the encounter with Scylla and Charybdis:

• Originally, when Odysseus confronted the two perils of the sea, he was warned about their natures. Circe herself

STORY SEED: OTHER AVENUES

It might rub some troupes the wrong way to learn that the way to Atlantis is effectively a deus ex machina. We make no apology for the nature of that element of "The Ragnarök Gambit," as the god-machine is a signature element of classical legend and Greek theater. Certain alternatives might be more to the liking of some troupes with a greater sense of the game in comparison to the literary tradition, however. For those who would explore different methods of reaching Atlantis, many options become available.

• **Atlantis Ahoy!:** For troupes with a more mystical bent, particularly those who have obtained a map to the lost city, it might be less a question of finding *where* Atlantis is and more of a question of how to get there. The general vicinity might be good enough to "arrive," as long as other environmental circumstances are right. In this case, you could replace a malignant Charybdis with a whirlpool that leads to the aquatic depths without ruining the ship. The Scions will still have to determine under exactly what circumstances the whirlpool occurs, though, as well as how to get near it without jeopardizing the *Eurydice* (perhaps in one of the inflatable, outboard-powered Zodiac boats). This method has literary and folkloric precedent, too, invoking shades of Arthurian Avalon, Brigadoon, and even a bit of Lovecraft's "when the stars are right." The whirlpool need not even be central to the discovery. Perhaps mists part and lead to an Atlantean byway, or a portion of the sea becomes as the River Styx, to be crossed and then exited *somewhere else* on the other side. Alternatively, the characters might seek a particular iceberg or portion of the Antarctic ice shelf. This iceberg or other feature might contain an "ice cave," tunnel, or even frozen slide that deposits the characters in the midst of Atlantis, beneath the frozen surface of the ice shelf.

• **Fervent Exploration:** By counterpoint to all of the mythological occurrences taking place in "The Ragnarök Gambit," the way to Atlantis might be empirically and objectively reached. This option adds a degree of archaeological and expeditionary feel to the story, with the Scions staking out zones in which to "dig" where they believe the city to be located. Obviously, they won't be digging at sea, but they'll be exploring the depths first in diving gear, then with research probes, and perhaps even an old-fashioned diving bell. After that, they'll need to penetrate the ice shelf beneath which Atlantis lies, using specialized drills—or perhaps even something salvaged from the ruin of Scylla. This makes for a much less mystical introduction to Atlantis, and certainly makes the city a scientific find as opposed to one of a legitimate terra incognita, but that might suit the tastes of certain troupes. At the very least, it makes the characters' efforts impact the discovery of the city, as opposed to having the deus ex machina in place to bring them there.

• **Black Ops: Atlantis:** If you're of a mind to, you can really throw the cycle into high-gear by making the Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station a scientific operation funded by the American government. A bit of back story as to what the scientists are actually researching—they've *almost* found Atlantis, and they know what they're after—would explain a hushed-up military presence at the South Pole. The characters get to sneak onto Antarctica's landmass, commando their way to Amundsen-Scott, and then kick jack-booted soldiers' asses in the interests of making their way to the submerged city. It's about as far from the mythological classics as you can get, but sometimes, a little cathartic ass-beating can be fun. An option such as this requires that the characters somehow be made aware of the conspiracy to both find Atlantis and keep it covered up, but what's a few extra details like that for a Storyteller who wants to head in that direction? You'll also have to move Atlantis to directly beneath the South Pole. Finally, you'll have to go to great lengths to make sure that the National Science Foundation (or whatever organization actually pulls the strings in the cycle) never actually finds Atlantis proper. Remember, all of the divine and supernatural activity in the World as yet remains hidden from mundane witnesses. If someone found out the truth and managed to make that information publicly known, the tone of **Scion: Demigod** would change dramatically from what this book actually posits.

warned Odysseus about the threat the two monsters posed and advised him to sail closest to Scylla, thereby losing only six sailors instead of potentially losing every one. The choice was up to Odysseus to make, though, just like the captain puts the choice in the hands of the Scions here. If you want, you can have either the Oracle or Circe (if the characters ever actually met the latter) deliver the warning of what's to come. Sure, it reduces the surprise of the situation somewhat, but it does so with the benefit of cleaving more closely to the original legendary story. (Of course, Circe warned Odysseus *not* to fight too, lest he lose more sailors, but none of his sailors were Scions.)

• Speaking of cleaving to the original story, only one captain in history actually managed to evade the whirling waters of Charybdis after choosing that precarious route. That captain was the *Argo*'s Jason, and he did so with the aid of Zeus. If you're using the connection between Captain Nestor and the Argonaut of the same name, the good captain might remember the technique that allowed Jason to circumvent the cursed pool. The trick in this case, though, is to have the technique in question somehow involve the Scions. If the captain overcomes the challenge himself, all the characters will have done is stand by and watch his clever sailing, and that's not a good way to involve the players in the experience. The Scions' aid in this regard should be tailored uniquely to some asset the characters, or at least one of them, commands.

For example, a character renowned for legendary strength might be able to hang over the side of the *Eurydice* and pull against the monster's current with all his might at a nearby iceberg or rock outcropping that the whirlpool exposes in order to avoid the monster's greater draw. Characters with the power over weather or earth might be able to cause an earthquake beneath Scylla, plunging her into the seas, where her snapping tentacles won't pluck any sailors from their ships. Or perhaps a character with an affinity for animals can summon a pod of whales to swim counter to Charybdis's wrathful waves. Some grand ruse might cause Charybdis to crash into Scylla, destroying them both after a grueling but ultimately satisfying ordeal. The idea here is to provide an alternative to bare-knuckle brawling that attests to the Scions' greater abilities, wiles and purpose. Of course, the situations described here imply that the ship manages to evade the titanspawn, but that's okay. You'll simply need to concoct another way to have the characters find and arrive at Atlantis.

• If the Scions never really gave any thought to how they're going to deal with the halls of Atlantis, beneath the ice-choked seas, Scylla and Charybdis here can help them, inadvertently and perhaps even posthumously. If the Scions do engage the monsters in a physical fight and manage to defeat them or at least inflict significant damage upon them, they discover an odd bit of detritus left floating in the monsters' wake. They find their attention drawn to several loose, bobbing chambered nautiluses amid the blood and gore of the confrontation. That strikes the Scions as odd, because the beasts didn't seem to have any distinct connection to nautiluses, or have any affixed to them, or anything of that nature. If a character places the nautilus to his ear, however, he hears, not the sea, but the oceanic wind. Indeed, the breeze emanating from the shells is salty and pungent, but very fresh and rich. If the character holds the shell to his face or otherwise attaches it so that it is in the proximity of his nose or mouth, he'll find that he can breathe underwater, the nautilus providing a steady flow of sea air to him. These nautiluses work like this indefinitely, so they won't even have to worry about running out of air while searching the Atlantean depths. (That is, they'll probably worry somewhat, since they don't know that the shells' supply of air is infinite, but it's a way around the issue of needing diving gear.) The only real problem is that the nautiluses used this way are somewhat delicate, as evidenced by several of their number also found broken amid the flotsam of the battle. It's largely the Storyteller's discretion as to when to invoke their breakable nature, but combat is an undeniably precarious endeavor for them. Any time a character suffers a blow that inflicts two or more points of damage in a melee while she has the nautilus attached, there's a one-in-ten chance that the nautilus breaks—certainly leaving the character in watery peril.

Scene

STORMING THE GATES OF ATLANTIS

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL •• SOCIAL –

As the sea monsters deposit the characters at the bottom of the ocean, or as the detritus of the *Eurydice* sinks there, the Scions notice a strange path on the ice shelf, alarmingly shallow beneath the water of the sea. Alternatively, if they're left bobbing at the surface of the ocean, they notice a trail of luminous bubbles beneath the surface of the water.

As the characters follow the path or the bubbles, they're led to what seems like any other enormous sheet of ice that makes up the submerged "landscape" of much of Antarctica. The bubbles, though, are coming up from beneath this sheet of ice. There's something *down there* that's bleeding off air.

They've found Atlantis. Rather, they've found where a surface map might suggest Atlantis is, but they must first pierce the icy barrier to reach it. Naturally, any of the characters' unique skills, Birthrights or clever ideas are the best way to indulge this necessity. The process should be arduous, but not one that holds the story at bay for the sake of collecting successes. Whether the characters pound through the ice with Epic Strength, melt it with the heat of hellfire, turn it to a liquid with Water Boons or cut through it with a hijacked pneumatic underwater drill, they'll be able to crack the frozen barrier of ice beyond which lies fabled Atlantis.

Once the characters manage to break through the ice shelf and follow the trail of bubbles, what they see astounds them: an entire cityscape, mile upon mile of abandoned ruin along the sea floor, reaching up to great heights in some places, little more than crumbled walls at others. Towers soar high into the sea's currents where once they would have reached toward the heavens.

Humble homes lie almost entirely dilapidated. Shiny stones glitter in what were once streets. Dazzling coral inexplicably grows in the icy water obscuring windows and splitting sundered roofs. Stalactites of ice delve down into the city, cracking some towers. Frozen floes of ice float by, carried by unseen currents, occasionally caroming off buildings or unwary characters. The panoply offers an almost boundless sense of wonder, and conveys an equally aching feeling of loss. Here lie the ice-encrusted remains of what was once one of the World's great cities. All that remains now are shifting tides, memories and rimed stone.

A great ziggurat marked with strange glyphs stands prominently in the ruined city, climbing high into the lightening waters near the surface. The top two "steps" of the ziggurat itself have been knocked to one side, where something crushed the stone of the temple open. A giant cargo ship, the *Helen Grace*, is the culprit, having hit the submerged temple long ago, then capsized itself, then finally frozen to the structure. The remains of the ship still lie over the temple, pinned there, upside-down, to the very temple top that snagged it, enveloped in a round-edged expanse of ice.

While this scene has no formal, open conflict, don't let that fool you. The actual purpose of this scene is twofold: to allow the players to witness the storied grandeur of Atlantis, and to give the Scions a chance to catch their breath before things swing into overdrive. Most of what the characters will be doing in this scene is looking for Kane Taoka, but that's not to say that's all that has to happen here. To the contrary, finding sunken Atlantis is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and the characters will hopefully want to avail themselves of the mysterious lost world to which only they and their greatest rivals are privy. The Epic Storytelling chapter in the core **Scion** rulebook made mention of indulging the infinite special effects budget of the imagination, and this is a great time to do so. Take the basic general overview of Atlantis as described on pages 128–141, add a handful of your own flourishes, and allow the Scions to revel in their own private, legendary playground to their heart's content.

Such being the case, you can stretch out this scene for as long as the players are interested in exploring the ruins. The suggestions for encounters that follow should round out the scene, giving the characters a goal to pursue while readying themselves for the impending conflict with Kane Taoka.

SEARCHING FOR KANE

Atlantis is a large city, even in its frozen ruin, covering enough ground to house a million residents. The Temple of Badarus and Amnis is the only structure that survived the city's submersion reasonably intact, and this is evident even from a cursory overview of the city. Everything else suffered in the massive sundering of the city and the ravages of the sea and the impact of thousands of years of ice expanding and forcing the architecture apart.

Therefore, the Temple of Badarus and Amnis is probably the best bet for finding a Band of renegade Scions trying to harness divine energy in an attempt

IT'S DANGEROUS DOWN HERE

Atlantis lies as much as hundreds of feet below the water's surface, and as few as 40 feet beneath. Even at its highest point, Atlantis lies a hell of a lot deeper beneath the surface than the deep end of your average swimming pool.

That means, even at the top of the ziggurat, the pressure is about two atmospheres. In the streets of Atlantis, some 300 feet below the surface, the pressure can be as great as 11 atmospheres. That might not sound like a lot, but nitrogen narcosis can occur at depths of only 150 feet. Combining that atmospheric pressure with the brutally cold waters near Antarctica (not to mention the chill of the omnipresent ice itself) can make for a very unpleasant expedition, for those unprepared for the environmental severity.

While it's outside the scope of this story to simulate things like decompression sickness, pulmonary barotraumas, and the like, it's worth bringing up the concept of atmospheric pressure and extreme cold as a general environmental hazard. Mention it, let the players come up with a way for their characters to cope with it, and move on, revisiting the subject only when it's dramatically appropriate or when the Scions do something to jeopardize their systems for dealing with the pressure or cold.

When you do want to invoke the devastating effects of cold or pressure or just the potential of drowning, we recommend inflicting a penalty on the characters such as those assessed by suffering extreme damage. That is, when the water gets cold or the pressure increases significantly, assess a -1 external penalty to physical actions the characters undertake. When the characters are swimming or climbing through the depths of Atlantis, that penalty should increase to a -3. Truly otherworldly cold, such as in the icy rivers of Helheim, are likewise outside the scope of the story, but might impose a nightmarish penalty as debilitating as -5. Further, conditions might be so hostile as to require the expenditure of a Willpower point just to climb into the turbulent, freezing water.

Again, these environmental penalties should be invoked only if the characters are unprepared. If they make some degree of accommodation for the extreme cold and pressure, don't derail the story by fretting over details. If the characters planned for the icy seas, as they should, great. If they didn't, hit them with penalties and remind them that sometimes being the child of a God means undertaking the most harrowing of tasks.

to push the city back up above the waves. Unless you decide otherwise, that's where Kane and his cronies can be found.

The benefit the players' characters have (as mentioned before) is that Kane has no reason to suspect they're here. This scene should allow them to realize that, however slowly they put the pieces together, and also let them take advantage of the opportunity to perhaps create an ambush.

For their part, the rival Scions have made little effort to hide their presence at the temple. A combination of chemical lights and "lanterns" made of cages that contain bioluminescent mollusks lights the pathway to the temple's front door. Various discarded tools lie scattered around the site as well, some primitive, some top-of-the-line.

The renegade Scions have posted no sentries at the doors of the temple, so getting in without being seen is no issue. Remaining hidden while inside the temple is a different matter, however, as there's not much to excavate inside, and much of what's there is reflective ice, so the Scions don't have much of that occupying their attention or distracting them. Rather, Kane and his fellows are busily preparing the temple and the intruding *Helen Grace* for the ritual intended to send the city to the surface.

Allow the characters to do all the reconnaissance they wish, finding out as much as they can about the rival Scions' operation before leaping into the fray. The following information is noteworthy to the characters:

• The actual ritual looks like it's probably going to take place in the hulk of the *Helen Grace*. If the characters snoop around a bit there, they'll learn that there's effectively an underwater "cavern" in the ship's hull that contains a huge pocket of breathable air. Presumably, Kane's performing the ritual in this chamber so he can speak the necessary words without being burdened by the icy underwater environment or his bulky scuba gear.

• So, yes, the Shinsengumi Scions have scuba gear. They didn't have to deal with Charybdis and Scylla, so they don't have any of the mystic breathing nautiluses. This means that they occasionally have to resurface to replace oxygen tanks in addition to handling their other logistical concerns like eating and sleeping. The Scions have a small camp set up on one of the peripheral islands

near the coast of Antarctica, rising up from one of the ice shelves about a mile from the site of the city. This is where all of these operational details are handled and the equipment is stored. It's a small camp—nothing more than a few tents, some refill pumps and the equipment the Band used to refresh the air trapped inside the *Helen Grace*—but it's certainly a place to establish an ambush or commit a little sabotage on the Scions' supplies.

• Kane himself only rarely leaves the hull of the shipwreck and never goes farther than the temple proper. He leaves the supply duty to the other Scions in his Band, not wanting to risk something unknown going on and potentially jeopardizing his plan to revivify the city. He sleeps, eats and otherwise conducts himself in the cargo hold of the ship. He has a little camp-area of his own, consisting of a bedroll, a space heater run by a rechargeable fuel cell, and a stack of waterproofed books and tubes (the latter of which contain delicate and ancient maps of the city, scrolls with ritual preparations on them, and the like).

• The interior of the shipwreck is lit by red emergency lighting, which actually aids the characters in any hide-and-seek or fact-finding activities they undertake by helping them remain hidden. The lighting conditions offer an external bonus of +1 to (Dexterity + Stealth) checks made for the characters. The Scions have indeed brought down a portable generator, but they run it only when necessary, as running it too long could pollute the precious breathable air. This red light occasionally mingles with the blue lights beneath the surface of the water and the clear- to milky white of the encroaching ice to create a weird and sinister purple aura in certain regions, mostly near where the water yields to the "cavern." The ship's emergency power source *probably* has enough juice to keep the lights functional for the duration of the ritual (and the encounter whereby the players' Scions stop Kane). If you want to turn out the lights in the ritual chamber itself, though, that could make for an exciting environmental hazard that both the players' Scions and Kane's renegades will have to deal with.

What we assume here is that the players' characters don't just clatter recklessly into the temple or the ruined *Helen Grace* and try to stomp any enemies they see. (If they do try to do that, you'll want to skip directly to Scene Four.) We figure that the players will want their characters to take advantage of the newfound information that they have the benefit of surprise and set an ambush for Kane's Band, or at least put together some kind of tactical plan for the attack. That's the reason Scene Three exists—to keep them from getting too comfortable in their position of superiority. If your troupe ends up taking action that precludes the characters from partaking in the events of Scene Three, that's fine. You can have them encounter the Atlantean elites later or eliminate the scene entirely. In fact, if you have the sort of gung-ho, kamikaze players who you *just know* are going to start swinging the second they find the rival Scions, you might wish to integrate the events

STORY SEED: THANK THE GODS WE FOUND YOU!

For some Storytellers, the power of Legend could be a very central theme of the characters' cycle. In such a case, consider having the minor Scions from Act One of "The Ragnarök Gambit" show up here.

Of course, they'll be in way over their heads (more than literally). The responsibility will fall upon the players' Scions shoulders to explain to them that they'll be more of a liability than a help. They'll also need to broach the subject in a diplomatic manner so the lesser Scions don't feel slighted and try to take Kane on by themselves to prove they can…

…which is the entire point of getting them here, after all.

This story seed assumes that the minor Scions have gone and done whatever it was they decided to do when they parted ways with the players' characters at the end of Act One. As such, they've come to help and the draw of the players' Scions own increasing Legend allowed the minor Scions to find them.

What ensues, then, is the players' characters needing to extract the minor Scions from the inevitable trouble in which they find themselves, either in the attack of corrupt Atlanteans or by the greater threat of the Shinsengumi. The minor Scions, driven by their own Legend, want to help face down the dire threat, and in the absence of divine direction, they bite off far more than they can chew.

This story seed can be as complicated or as short term as you wish. The minor Scions might show up, have their asses handed to them, and then return to other affairs in embarrassment as the players' Scions help them out (again). Or you could use them as a recurring hostages/pawns, ever intervening with the best of intentions, but always needing the "big brother" Scions to come to the rescue. This can provide an interesting running commentary on the nature of Legend, suggesting that Legend is a force almost like Fate, existing to satisfy itself, regardless of whether its vehicle is God or Titan, Scion or titanspawn. In this case, Legend simply *is*, and it's greater than the World and the Overworld combined.

of Scene Three before or during the characters' hunt for Kane and his Band.

SCENE OPTIONS AND DIVERSIONS

If you know your troupe likes exploration, combat or other elements of the story, a little something extra might make the scene set amid the majesty of ice-rimed Atlantis a little more memorable. Given the preferences the troupe or Band has, the following encounters might enrich the story:

• **Treasure Hunt:** As the wonders of Atlantis are plentiful, so are the riches that can be had. Feel free to introduce a lost Atlantean relic if you think the Scions might be able to use a little edge in the upcoming conflict. Likewise, if you want the characters to find one of the Seals of Atlantis (see p. 191), they can turn up easily if the characters do a little freelance treasure-hunting against the backdrop of the greater concern of stopping Kane. Even a bit of mundane cash might turn up if the characters take a few trinkets here and there to be sold up on the surface. In most cases, buyers of these treasures will classify them as Greek, Egyptian or even Lemnian in origin. Even if the characters claim that their recovered treasures are from Atlantis, experts and archaeologists will probably just nod and smile and classify them as Greek anyway.

• **Making the Seas Safe:** Some troupes enjoy combat, and lots of it. If you know your troupe gets a kick out of physical conflicts, consider adapting Scene Three's combat with the Atlantean patrols and their "pets" into several encounters. While Scene Four consists of one significant conflict, you can instead make that the capper to a series of smaller conflicts.

Scene

WATCHING THE WATCHERS

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL •••• SOCIAL —

As the characters convene after their surveillance of the rival Scions' preparations, a shadow falls over them from above, or cuts off the light softly diffused by the ice from the exploratory site below them. While they might have just spent a long time discerning the fact that they have the drop on Kane's crew, some of the indigenous residents of sunken Atlantis managed to get the drop on them!

This scene is a brief interlude intended to showcase Atlantean architecture as a setting in which a thrilling, three-dimensional, underwater and ice-restricted combat can occur. The ruin of the city and the massive bodies of ice around them give the Scions and their attackers plenty of surfaces from which to engage in exciting stunts or to use as cover. The attack also reminds the characters that sometimes Legend isn't necessarily welcome, as the importance the characters have established for themselves (and that of the rival Scions) sometimes works as a trouble magnet.

ATLANTEAN ELITES

At some point in the history of Atlantis, certain citizens of the city that sank beneath the waves called upon powers beyond human ken to save them from their watery doom. Perhaps the Gods cursed those Atlanteans who tried to escape their fate, or perhaps the Atlanteans made dark pacts with unspeakable Titans, but a few of the dwellers of that lost city managed to survive below water. These piscine-faced Atlanteans survived the hunts following the Cooks expedition and retreated ever further beneath the waves, nursing their hatred of the Gods and the rest of the World.

Patrols of these devolved Atlanteans still swim and brood near the sunken city's walls, turning back or killing those occasional curious creatures that move through the gelid depths, and now the intruding Scions. These Atlanteans have trained in the mold of desperate fugitives, and their ability to move beneath the water is native. Their armor is a patchwork made from a nautilus here, whalebone there, and the occasional scrap of wet-forged iron from beneath the sea. Helmets segmented like lobster tails hide their fishy faces, but they certainly don't have any difficulty seeing out of them. Their trident-javelins are made of jagged coral, and each also wields a brutal xiphos. They travel in squads of five, and (based on how powerful the players' characters are) they may be joined by a sixth Atlantean riding a zeuglodon.

These atavistic Atlanteans are exceptionally territorial, and their initial response to interlopers, especially sentient interlopers, is to stab and spear the hell out of them and sort out how they found their way into the city later. To their credit, almost no one who visits Atlantis these days speaks Atlantean, so most attempts at communication are doomed to failure. If the Scions do attempt to parley, the elites' leader will spend a few moments indulging the attempt, but only a miraculous showing on the Scions' parts will prevent the nigh-inevitable skirmish from happening. Fighting with the Atlanteans isn't a foregone conclusion, it's just what the aquatic degenerates do best, and it's how they protect their wretched way of life.

Anyone who bears a Seal of Atlantis (as Kane Taoka does) or a sigil of Badarus's favor will be granted wide berth, though not necessarily given the run of the place. On the other hand, a character bearing a sigil of Artemis or Poseidon (such as a Scion of who received his God's trinket at the beginning of "The Long Road to Heaven"), will be attacked without warning or quarter.

The Atlanteans definitely have a xenophobic outlook, and an outsider who reveres a common divine interest is still an outsider.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4; Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1 (with helmet removed); Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Ambition 2, Malice 3, Rapacity 2, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Craft (Cold-Forging) 2, Integrity 3, Investigation 2, Medicine 2, Melee 4, Occult 2, Presence 2, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Thrown 2

Supernatural Powers:

Banishing Tide: The Banishing Tide is a ranged attack (Accuracy 5, Damage 5L, Range 30, Speed 4). When an Atlantean chooses to attack using the Banishing Tide, any other Atlantean within five yards may choose to augment the tide, increasing the Damage total by two. Atlanteans augmenting the primary user's attack don't roll for the attack themselves; instead they simply add their +2 bonus to the Damage the target suffers if the attack is successful. Using this power costs one Legend, whether invoking it oneself or augmenting another's Banishing Tide.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 6, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Speed 6

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 5, Damage 7B, Parry DV 2, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 7, Damage 4B, Parry DV 3, Speed 4

Xiphos: Accuracy 8, Damage 7L, Parry DV 4, Speed 4

Coral Javelin (thrown): Accuracy 5, Damage 7L, Range 30 (10 in water), Speed 4

Soak: 6L/11B (Aquatic jetsam harness, 6L/7B, -2 mobility penalty)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 4/2 **Willpower:** 7

Legend: 2 **Legend Points:** 4

Other Notes: Atlantean elites breathe water with native ease and normally on dry land without difficulty. They do not have obvious, external breathing mechanisms. Rather, their lungs are mystically endowed to allow them to endure such feats of stamina. Atlanteans do need to remain wet, however, and each hour they spend on dry land or otherwise out of their salt-water environment causes one unsoakable health level of bashing damage. They are immune to hypothermia and all extremes of cold short of absolute freezing itself. They are likewise immune to extremes of atmospheric pressure, though this last also appears to be mystical rather than physiological.

ZEUGLODON

A zeuglodon is a prehistoric, 60-foot-long relative of the modern whale, with a much more serpentine body than its modern counterparts and the disposition of a surly drunk with an empty whiskey bottle. These true-to-life sea serpents are assumed to be extinct in the World today, but beneath the icy darkness of the Antarctic waters, they still survive and breed in small numbers, where Titans and titanspawn alike cultivate their now-mythic numbers. Atlantean elites in particular domesticate these ill-tempered beasts and use them as mounts while scouting or when they need to take on something much more formidable than themselves (such as the children of Gods). Such domestication is a fairly tentative measure, and riding one into battle often more closely resembles optimistically hanging on to reins attached to the creature while it charges its prey in a fury.

The zeuglodon's typical tactic in combat is to find a thing that makes it mad and bite that thing really hard. Failing that, it thrashes that thing angrily with its muscular tail (which makes up most of its body). It's a carnivorous, Eocene-epoch whale—hardly the most sophisticated of tacticians.

Among a patrol of five Atlantean elites, a sixth is often present and mounted on the back of a zeuglodon. These whale-riders are exactly like other Atlanteans, but they add Control (Zeuglodon) 2 to their Abilities.

Attributes: Strength 12, Dexterity 4, Stamina 8; Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1; Perception 4, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

Virtues: Ambition 1, Malice 3, Rapacity 4, Zealotry 1

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 4, Brawl 3, Integrity 3, Presence 3, Stealth 4 (!), Survival 4

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Ram: A zeuglodon may choose to ram an object or vessel, instead of biting it or thrashing with its tail. This ram attack is a "legendary" effort, being the stuff of which sea serpent attacks are made. A zeuglodon's epic ram inflicts 100L damage. That's right: one hundred dice, all lethal. (We recommend rolling 10 dice 10 times.) The zeuglodon must have a quarter-mile's swimming start to build up suitable speed for the ram, and if the object rammed is smaller than the zeuglodon itself (like, say, a Scion), you should make a roll for the beast to successfully impact the target. This roll is a contested (Dexterity + Athletics) roll, and players of non-native swimmers suffer a two-die external penalty on the roll. (Simply using one's Dodge DV doesn't suffice here.) Using this power requires the expenditure of a Legend point. For one full day after a ram attack like this is made, the zeuglodon is exhausted, and suffers a three-dice internal penalty on all physical actions.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Hellish Bite: Accuracy 7, Damage 15L, Parry DV —, Rate 2, Speed 5

Sinuous Thrash: Accuracy 6, Damage 13B, Parry DV —, Rate 1, Speed 2

Soak: 4L/8B

Health Levels: -0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 3 **Willpower:** 7

Legend: 1 **Legend Points:** 1

Other Notes: Creatures the size of zeuglodons don't often chew their food, they swallow it whole. As such, zeuglodons may attempt to swallow whole an object (or person) of twice a man's size or smaller. This is handled as a Hellish Bite attack (but dealing no immediate damage). Thereafter, you may spend a point of Willpower on the zeuglodon's behalf. If this happens, the object or character is swallowed, and suffers two automatic levels of lethal damage every 15 minutes, until it has no more health levels left, at which point it's considered digested. A swallowed character will probably want to fight his way out, which he may do, albeit at a -4 external penalty (since the creature's guts are designed to keep potentially hostile food down there).

TANNIN

While the zeuglodon is analogous to the modern whale, the tannin (plural: tanninim) is cousin to the sea crocodile, with one vast difference: The tannin is a creature out of Jewish folklore (where it metaphorically ties this demon progenitor to Egypt). Their presence here is a bit jarring to those who know their mythology, but the implication of the tanninim's being in this environment is that of a connection between Ancient Egypt and lost Atlantis. If you think this might distract the players, leave it out, but it's a curiosity that enterprising Storytellers might wish to explore in their own side stories.

A sea serpent on par with Leviathan, the original Tannin was believed to be a demon of the sea, part dragon or serpent. While the tanninim associated with the Atlanteans aren't those literal demons of folklore, they are nonetheless fiendish kin to saltwater crocodiles and just as aggressive as that description suggests. A tannin grows up to 24 feet in length, but most of this abandoned species left in the World are about 15 feet long.

Unlike normal crocodiles, tanninim don't need to breathe air. Also unlike saltwater crocodiles, tanninim aren't lazy, and their terrible tempers combine with their great bulk to make them almost constantly hungry. Their monstrous (as opposed to animal) origins are probably to blame for this aberration of natural design, but few victims bother to dwell on what makes the tanninim so vicious when a tannin is bearing down on them.

Tanninim refuse to be ridden. Occasionally, one of the forsaken Atlanteans manages to tame a brace of three, but the beasts' capricious nature makes this a rare and dangerous proposition. Atlanteans who husband and train such deep-sea horrors are assumed to have Animal Ken 2 in addition to their normal Abilities.

Attributes: Strength 10, Dexterity 5, Stamina 10; Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1; Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Virtues: Ambition 1, Malice 3, Rapacity 4, Zealotry 1

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Brawl 3, Integrity 2, Presence 5, Stealth 2, Survival 4

Supernatural Powers:

Sekem Barrier: The demon Tannin passed down a bit of its divine spark of soul to its lesser fledglings, as evidenced by their occasionally used power of the Sekem Barrier. The Sekem Barrier is described on page 152 of **Scion: Hero**. For the purposes of the tannin's Sekem Barrier only, the creature is treated as if it had Legend 6. (This does not affect other powers or effects that rely upon Legend, nor does it affect the number of Legend points available to the tannin.)

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Death Roll (grapple): Accuracy 11, Damage 11B, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Primeval Jaws: Accuracy 6, Damage 12L, Parry DV —, Speed 6

Soak: 5L/10B

Health Levels: -0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 4 **Willpower:** 2

Legend: 1 **Legend Points:** 1

Other Notes: Like the other creatures scourging the depths of the seas near Atlantis, tanninim are immune to extremes of atmospheric pressure and cold. Tanninim can also remain above water on dry land with no adverse effects. Their favored tactic against land-dwelling prey is to grab an unsuspecting morsel, drag it into the frigid water and take it for a death roll. After it's tumbled its food into suitable submission, the tannin chows down with its vast maw.

TACTICS AND TIMING

The timing of when Scene Three ends and Scene Four begins is at the Storyteller's discretion. The Atlanteans and their companions can attack entirely out of the blue, or the Scions can see them coming and prepare for the conflict—well, prepare for a moment, anyway. It's still better than being blindsided.

Suggested forces on the Atlantean side are seven Atlantean elites, with one riding a zeuglodon and one in control of a brace of three tanninim. The Atlanteans' typical tactics against an unknown threat include sending the zeuglodon rider blasting through the collective enemy, then having the elite soldiers swim in with a brace of tanninim and finish off the stragglers. The Atlanteans don't know, however, that this time they're facing Scions, the children of the Gods, and those Scions are trying to fulfill a duty upon which the fate of the World hangs. That being the case, the Scions are going to have a lot to fight for, and they're certainly more powerful than a handful of scientists primarily interested in seismic activity (the elites' usual prey). The elites don't know that, though, so they stick with what's done them well enough so far.

You should take full advantage of the semi-frozen aquatic environment, as it's foolish for the Atlanteans to fight otherwise. Have the collected elites split up, hiding behind the ruins or ice protrusions so the characters will have to hunt them down one by one. Have them swim quickly through collapsed stone arches that will take the landlubbing Scions longer to navigate. Have

UNDERWATER ENVIRONMENT

The primary difference between land-based combat and undersea combat is the addition of the third dimension. While it's easily assumed that one combatant in a fight on land might stand on a rock or climb a staircase, he and his opponent are still effectively pointed at one another and confined to the "ground," whatever height that ground is.

Underwater, an attack can literally come from any direction, including above or below. Most Scions will be unfamiliar with situations such as this, being land-based people. A few might have some experience flying—another three-dimensional environment—but even there, the circumstances are different, as weight *feels* different underwater than it does on land or in the air.

It's an environmental element that the rules-light **Scion** systems aren't built to handle in great detail. To simulate the alien feel of underwater fighting with the occasional intrusion of solid ice, we recommend imposing a one-die external penalty on characters who come from terrestrial environments when they engage in combat underwater, which is almost certainly the vast majority of the players' Scions. You should also make an extra effort to describe the strangeness of the situation when adjudicating characters' actions. It's easy for a character to be not only turned around but upside-down as well, for example. A blindside attack might take the character by surprise from above, disorienting him and sending him reeling at an odd angle made impossible by gravity above water. This may even be something as simple as losing one's breathing apparatus briefly or having one's vision made murky by sediment stirred underwater.

Fair is fair, though. If you decide to impose these external penalties on the players' characters, you should also impose them on Kane and the other evil Scions in the next scene.

STORY SEED: IT'S NO ACCIDENT

It might be more than blind bad luck or the Fateful Aura that places the Atlanteans in the path of the players' characters for this scene. If you wish to put different motivations behind the Atlanteans and their presence, you have a wide variety of significant motivators to consider.

• **Sentries:** Since the Atlanteans are titanspawn—as are their mounts and "hounds"—it's possible that they're in the employ of Kane Taoka, or at least on loan as additional muscle from some Titan. If this is the case, that means the Titans are taking a very active role in Kane's efforts to raise Atlantis. Indeed, it's no longer a grudge between just Kane and Amaterasu with Mikaboshi as the Scion's adoptive parent.

• **Titanic Rivalry:** It may be that the Atlanteans are there in order to report back to a Titan—but that Titan need not necessarily be in league with Mikaboshi. In fact, it's just as likely that the Titans are themselves embroiled in unknowable conflicts of their own, stabbing each other in the back, setting various pawns and agents in motion, and united only in the now-complete common goal of escaping entirely from their immortal prisons. Much as the Gods feud, the Titans certainly feud, too, and knowing whose agents are up to what could enable another Titan to cut Mikaboshi's legs out from under him when they do manage to break into the World utterly. A story development like this shifts the focus from the Gods and their children a little more into the politics of the "evil" side. Yet since evil devours itself, this option could set the groundwork for a grand scene later where the players' Scions manage to topple some Titan plot with the aid of another Titan's influence. The enemy of an enemy is one's friend, after all, and (most) Gods aren't too proud to use the enemy's treacheries against them.

• **Loki's Spies:** It could be that Loki has organized these particular titanspawn to keep an eye on Kane. Perhaps Loki wants to make sure that Sly Guiler is being true to him and has led Kane to Atlantis in his roundabout way. Perhaps Loki simply doesn't think Kane is capable of doing the deed on his own and needs to know where to "help" when he can. Maybe Loki's upset at being stood up in Reykjavik by the players' Scions and suspects them of having caught wind of the Atlantis plot. Maybe Loki is engaged in some kind of feud with Mikaboshi and wants to make sure the Titan doesn't somehow take more than his due when Atlantis rises from the ocean floor. Whatever the motivation, the odd thing is that Loki doesn't normally command spawn like the Atlanteans. Of course, that means that someone else is in league with Loki, and given the agents in question, it's almost certainly one of the other Titans.

them hit and run, using their faster speed beneath the waves to stage guerilla strikes and then swim under an ice floe, leaving others of their gang to swoop in from an unexpected direction and make another attack. Once they see they're facing a physically tough opponent, the Atlanteans will try to bring down their enemies like a pack of wolves harrying a deer. Remember, the Atlanteans are on their home territory and they're in their cursed natural environment. They'll use the X, Y, and Z axes of undersea movement to their best of their ability and probably have the characters on the ropes for it, if only briefly.

COMPLICATIONS

As if the Atlanteans themselves aren't a big enough threat, if the characters allow the zeuglodon to engage in some catastrophic attack, it'll probably alert Kane's Scions to their presence. The renegade Scions, like the players' characters, aren't native to the aquatic environment, so they'll likely miss any confrontation between the characters and the Atlantean elites. If that zeuglodon makes one of those 100-dice ram attacks, though, and it levels one of the ruins, crashes into the *Helen Grace*, or otherwise makes as much racket and rumbling as a 100-dice attack does, all the commotion is going to alert the rival Scions.

Bear this in mind while adjudicating the combat between the Scions and the Atlanteans. The battle can have all manner of repercussions that are going to have to be considered afterward. For example, if the zeuglodon bashes into the *Helen Grace*, that'll probably stop the ritual—but only for the time being, as Kane will try again. If the Shinsengumi learns of the characters' presence through the racket they're making, that takes a powerful asset away from the players' Scions. They'll no longer have the element of surprise and they'll effectively be on equal footing with the Shinsengumi.

Every action in this combat has its consequences, and dealing with the Atlanteans and their beasts might be only the least of those repercussions.

Scene

THE UNRAVELING

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL ••••• SOCIAL •

The climax of Act Two, this scene is a turning point for the cycle. Much is at stake. Kane Taoka's goal is nothing less than the completion of a ritual that will lift Atlantis from the ocean floor to resume its place at the surface. If the Scions succeed in halting Kane's ritual, they will literally have saved the World, at least for the present. If they fail, disaster is imminent. If the Atlantean land mass rises, not only will Mt. Erebus itself erupt, so will the 30-plus active volcanoes present on the Atlantean continent now known as Antarctica. The energy released in the ritual will melt the polar ice of Antarctica and churn millions of tons of dust and volcanic ash into the sky. The melt will raise the water level all across the World, sending much of what is today dry land into the sea. The clouds of debris will block out the sun's light, cooling the planet immensely.

Ultimately, Kane's attempt to raise Atlantis constitutes the first moment of Ragnarök. If the water rises globally and the planet is cut off from the sun's warming light, a Worldwide winter will occur. This is the Fimbulwinter of Norse myth—the prelude to "the fate of the Gods"—an endless winter with no renewing summer. In the wake of the eternal winter, wars will break out, siblings will strike down siblings, and horrible monsters from outside the World will seethe in from their otherworldly prisons and make the Earth their ultimate battleground.

Needless to say, this isn't a very good development for many people. Most of the Gods oppose it entirely, as any sane divinity would. A few Gods, however, welcome the arrival of this terrible time. Loki is first and foremost among them, and he welcomes the destruction of the World as his place in the Ragnarök prophecy. A handful of Death Gods likewise anticipate the event, hoping to populate their ranks with millions and millions of fallen men and women.

For the sake of the World, this must not come to pass.

SCION INFORMATION

Backgrounds, traits and other information on Kane Taoka's Band of rogue Scions can be found in Chapter Six, on pages 292–298.

SETTING THE STAGE

As the characters know from their reconnaissance, Kane Taoka's ritual is planned to take place atop the Temple of Badarus and Amnis within the air pocket trapped in the capsized cargo hold of the *Helen Grace*. This scene can effectively begin whenever the players' Scions decide to take the fight directly to Kane and his cronies. Unless they give away their presence (such as by drawing attention to themselves in the Atlanteans' sneak attack, or in being seen at the site when they first discover the temple and the *Helen Grace*), this particular plot point takes place at their discretion.

In the interests of giving you as many tools as possible with which to custom-tailor this scene to your own troupe's Scions, we're deliberately leaving several details open on the schedule.

Ritual Functions

For one, the ritual can begin at any time. We have established no hard-and-fast rules for the satisfaction of the ritual. The beginning of the end of the World isn't exactly something that deserves codification in terms of how many actions or Legend points it takes to invoke. Simply put, if the players' characters screw up badly, the whole wretched thing takes place. If the players' Scions do what heroes do and take Kane to task, the ritual fails. Atlantis remains beneath the sea. The rival Scions—probably most of them, at least—flee to plan their next horrendous scheme.

The occurrence of the ritual can be a slow event that the characters perhaps witness beginning as they're sneaking around the *Helen Grace* the first time. In this case, the ritual requires constant maintenance, with ominous happenings as this act plays on. Sub-sea "earthquakes" might happen, as bits of the sea floor or massive columns of ice shift in preparation of forcing Atlantis upward. A mystic glamour might shimmer over the surface of the ice-encased topography, giving a hazy impression of the city's features during its glory days. Insubstantial "ghosts" (who look nothing like the fish-faced elites now lurking in the ruin) might wander the streets of the sunken city, waiting for their time to return to reality as citizens again. Indeed, you could set the ritual in motion *before* the characters even arrive on the scene for the first time, in order to really pour on the sense of desperation and of time being of the essence.

Alternatively, the ritual can be a brief affair that Kane begins just before the characters arrive. The heroic Scions' timely arrival confounds the ritual, and the battle between the Scions then occurs as much out of spite on Kane's end as it does justice on behalf of the players' characters.

The Wreck of the *Helen Grace*

Another open option for the Storyteller is the nature of the *Helen Grace*'s wreck. While we've specifically stated that it's the cargo hold of the capsized cargo ship that holds the air pocket, we haven't stated how large the cargo hold is, or how much of it actually escaped submersion or encroaching volumes of craggy ice.

With that in mind, you can define how much space you want to use in the climactic confrontation between the Scions. You might want an entire upended cargo bay in which to stage the conflict, giving the characters upside-down catwalks to run across, spilled rectangular cargo containers to hurl at each other, a broken crane with which to suspend cable-bound enemies above the fracas and maybe even a hidden trove of contraband to discover and use against the enemy. Or you might wish to have very little of the area protected by the air pocket, running the battle amid an environmental threat like a hellish *Poseidon Adventure* with active enemies. In this case, the air itself might be a valuable asset, with the two factions of Scions hotly contesting a precious resource too small for the both of them to share. (And they don't want to share anyway, given that one group is trying to destroy the World and the other group wants to stop that.)

Group Tactics

Exactly how the enemy Scions conduct themselves is in your hands as well.

Depending upon other factors, such as how much room exists for them and how long the ritual is going to take, the renegade Scions might be spread all over the ship, or even in the temple proper while Kane enacts the ritual. This can make for a suspenseful, snatch-and-sneak expedition through the *Helen Grace*, in which the heroic Scions have to quietly overcome the enemy Scions lest those renegades sound an alarm and make a stand in full force.

Alternatively, the enemy Scions might be gathered collectively in anticipation of the ritual's completion and Atlantis's rise. This creates an anything-goes situation—a conflict in which a dozen children of the Gods all let fly with every reality-breaking divine power they have at their beck and call, with the ultimate goal of the obliteration of the other side in as final a manner as is possible. With all six of the renegade Scions on one side, and as many Scions as the players number on the other, the battle will be an insane rampage of crossed-off health levels and spectacular special effects.

Some amount of scaled challenge is also possible, with perhaps a "patrol" of two Scions keeping watch over the temple while the other renegades present rest, study, excavate, assist with the ritual or do whatever it is evil people do while waiting for their wickedness to come to fruition.

ACTIVE SET DRESSING

Let's face it—a battle in a capsized cargo ship that crashed into a sunken temple in the center of a frozen-over, fabled Atlantis is a kick-ass place to have a climactic conflict. Unless you really turn the details of the battle up to 11, you're just not making full use of everything that's been offered. The following section describes a few interesting events and setting phenomena that can help make the battle even more memorable. As always, you don't necessarily have to introduce these as written if you have other ideas. Use them as stock, customize them to your own liking or create your own. Whatever you do, make the battle significant and have the setting interact almost consciously with the Scions. The World's at stake, after all, and anything less than a swooping combat with the soundtrack blaring behind you and the players screaming "Holy crap!" is a missed opportunity.

- **Stone Lances and Frozen Stalactites:** At random intervals, spines of stone erupting from the ocean's floor pierce the walls of the temple and even the hull of the

Helen Grace itself. Pointed protrusions of ice descend from what used to be the floor of the cargo hold. Among these are errant pillars of stone upon which the rest of the city is rising, and sometimes, the ruin is just too sodden and yields to these giant, spiky outcroppings of violently growing rock or ice. Lances can impale hapless Scions, crush other features of the environment, or even create a physical obstacle between two rival Scions who were just about to go at it in the conclusion of a dramatic soliloquy.

• **Icy Flotsam:** As various debris floats into the temple and ship during the climactic conflict, portions of Antarctica's ice shelf have broken off and occasionally tumble down from above, into the way of dueling Scions. These submerged ice floes are larger than men and provide cover from attacking foes or objects to hurl at enemies.

• **Collapsing Architecture:** With the battle taking place in the Temple of Badarus and Amnis, some collateral damage is bound to occur. Pillars topple, ziggurat walls fall, buttresses or cornices crumble... Use any overt symbol of destruction and ruin you can think of. Any of these falling objects are enough to crush a man, but the Scions are likely more durable than that. Besides, what's a better image of relentless devotion to an ideal than dropping a wall on a guy *and having him walk out from under the rubble?*

• **Dust and Ash Eddies:** The very sedimentary dust and volcanic ash that would blot out the sun stirs in whorls, borne by the waves and deep-sea current as the battle rages. These clouds can obstruct Scions who hide among them or even blind Scions who don't

STORY SEEDS: WATERY ATLANTIS (EXTENDED REMIX)

If Kane succeeds in part of the ritual, or if the ritual begins but is foiled by the timely arrival of the characters, the Scions of good might have a little more to put to rest before they go gamboling off into the Underworld. These scene-extending possibilities add a few more points that the heroes will need to address.

These story seeds are best suited to specific play styles, as their descriptions show. If the characters want a brief moment to wipe their brow before heading to Mt. Erebus, or if they're eager to see what happens next in the plot arc, don't burden the cycle with any of these additional story hooks. If your players prefer nonstop challenge or additional opportunities to solve mysteries or punch enemies in the throat, consider sowing one of these story seeds into the sequence of events.

• **Arise, Fallen Warriors:** A side benefit of Kane's ritual is that it will muster an army of undead soldiers. If the ritual was partly successful, it's the perfect chance to have legions of deathless Atlanteans rise from their watery graves and take up arms against whomever they happen to perceive as an enemy. Anyone who's nearby constitutes an enemy, and the only people nearby happen to be the players' Scions, so the characters' victory is either short-lived (at best) or incomplete (at worst). Still, this is a good optional scene to add for players who like mowing down slavering hordes of foes, as the Atlantean soldiers are really no match for the skilled, competent and divinely favored Scions. Suggested traits for these undying soldiers can be found on page 294 of **Scion: Hero**. They're different from the corrupted Atlanteans who devolved to deal with life in the icy depths; they're the ones who drowned when the continent first sank, or who lay in tombs even before that.

• **Spawning Season:** Keen-eyed Scions might notice a single salmon swimming nearby as the rumblings of aborted Atlantis gradually subside. There's something fishy about that fish, and whatever Scion witnesses it is justified in his hunch. The salmon is, in fact, Loki, who has taken the form of a fish to investigate exactly what's going on down here. (Once Loki conducts his fated murder of Baldur, he's destined to once again take the form of a salmon while trying to hide in a pool beneath Franang's Falls. His appearance in this scene is way of foreshadowing impending Ragnarök, which the trickster-God will find another way to set in motion.) The salmon proves uncatchable, save for one method: If a character uses a fishing net, he'll trap the slippery salmon. (This is another allusion to Loki's fate and history, as he invented the fishing net, according to Norse folklore.) What the characters *do* with a trapped God once they manage to snare him is a different matter, but perhaps he'll bargain a few answers for his release before they realize what, exactly, he is.

• **A Job Half-Done:** Now that they've halted Kane's disastrous ritual, the characters might need to find some way to return a partially raised Atlantis back to the bottom of the sea entirely. This necessity can potentially spawn a long subplot in which the characters collect relics of mystic import that, when combined, will perform the deed. It could instead form a shorter subplot in which the characters have to snoop around the city and find a relic already present that will do the same thing, amid occasional attacks by enraged elites and maybe even the ghosts of Atlantean citizens.

know they're there. See page 186 of **Scion: Hero** for information on fighting blind.

• **Sunk... Again!:** If the Scions in the cargo hold of the *Helen Grace* really make a hell of a clatter, they could rock the boat from its awkward home frozen atop the temple. The details of this occurrence might be as simple as imposing a -2 external penalty for actions taken in the ship while it tumbles down the side of the ziggurat, or they might be as severe as having to spend a Willpower point to take any action at all while the shipwrecked hulk spirals into the depths. Most importantly, as the ship twists in its second descent, it almost certainly loses (or at least redistributes) its reservoir of air, making breathing underwater a critical endeavor that could prove disastrous to Scions on both sides of the conflict. If the ship is knocked from its precarious moorings atop the temple, the ritual becomes all but impossible to complete, as the careful preparations Kane and his crew will have made are thrown suddenly askew.

INDIVIDUAL RESOLUTIONS

Allow the players' actions and the dice to resolve the conflict as usual. Despite the power level of the characters engaged in this battle, the rules exist so that everyone knows what happens when the dice indicate a certain result.

If you need to cheat, be discreet. Nothing's more frustrating for a player than learning a particular enemy is effectively untouchable because he has a later role to play. This goes for the players' characters, too. If it's time for a character to meet his end, it breaks the players' emotional investment in the game if they're allowed to reap the benefits of "beneficial cheating."

Taking Hostages

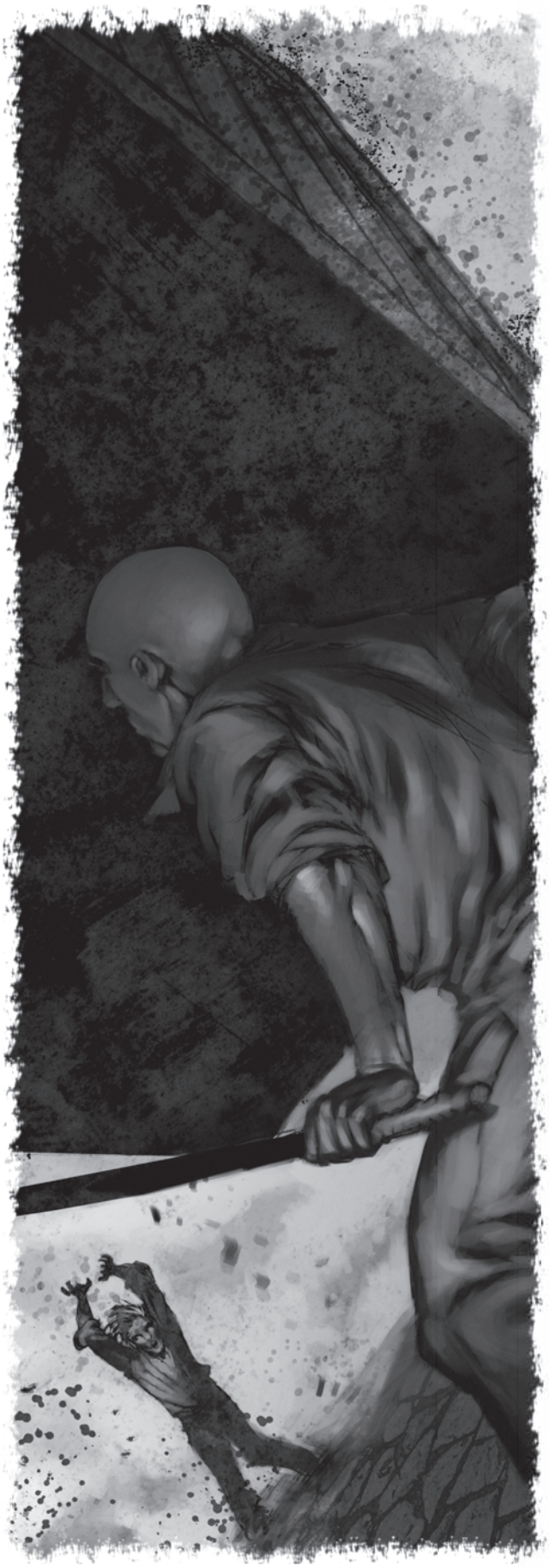
If the fight turns against them, most of the rival Scions will surrender or flee rather than offer up their lives for the sake of Kane's plot. (Indeed, most of the other Scions are unaware of the greater significance of Kane's efforts and are just going along with him out of fear or in the absence of divine direction.) The players' Scions might wish to take prisoners, and that's entirely appropriate.

Prisoners will gladly spill the beans when interrogated (hopefully at a time other than when the temple is falling down around them). That doesn't necessarily mean they've had a change of heart, however, and they will definitely try to escape when they think the circumstances are fortuitous to do so.

The only enemy Scion who gains "Storyteller immunity" from this treatment is Kane.

Razing Kane

It's important that Kane survives this encounter. More accurately, it's important that Kane survives this encounter while giving the impression of being destroyed or otherwise brought to his well-deserved end. Act Three sees Kane following the characters into the Underworld,



so something needs to happen that forces Kane out of the immediate picture and into some locality that allows him access to the Underworld.

Our suggestion is to allow one of the players' Scions to pummel Kane through the floor of the *Helen Grace* and down into the Temple of Badarus and Amnis, whereupon some excessively heavy piece of set dressing falls on him. The object seems to crush him but actually forces him through a weak portion of the ocean floor. If a character with Epic Strength or some other way of moving the object does so, there's literally nothing left.

What truly happened, though, is that Kane was crushed through the previous location and into one of the network of lava tubes that radiate outward from Mt. Erebus. Rushing water forces Kane through this tube, probably delirious with pain and fighting for breath, until the pressure equalizes and he emerges in a tube above the water line. He remains trapped in the expansive network of lava tubes until he finds the architects of his ruin, the players' Scions, moving through a similar tunnel in Act Three.

Killing Scions

It's a fact of every demigod's life: There's inevitably something out there that's meaner, tougher or more favored by Fate than you. Since the characters have been chasing these scurrilous Scions around the World, it's only fair that they be able to visit final justice on them, if they so choose, or perhaps at least one of them. The death of a major villain is an important scene in any medium, and a **Scion** cycle is no different.

Storytellers should carefully consider which of the enemy Scions are best suited for dramatic deaths, and allow them a moment of elegy if their ends actually come. We're not suggesting that you pick the Scion who most "has it coming" and whack him; we're suggesting that you not cheat in favor of (most of) the renegade Scions. As mentioned before, Kane makes his escape in spite of appearing to have been destroyed. Any of the other rogue Scions are fair game for dramatic deaths, should the dice or character contrivance dictate.

Fair is fair and justice is blind, and though we're loath to suggest it, sometimes the heroes die too. This scene in particular is a good place for a hero to meet his end, but again, only if that's what the dice say. Even more so than the villains, a hero should have his opportunity to deliver tender words as he surrenders his soul. Indeed, perhaps it's a great heroic sacrifice that results in the Scion's death but also takes with him one of the most nefarious of the enemy Scions. If it's dramatically appropriate, let the spirit of classical tragedy take precedence. If it's just a fluke, or an utterly anticlimactic death, at least give the character the dignity of a death temporarily deferred until a moment when it becomes significant. Of course, that time should come in this battle if the character truly dies. Don't let the player know, though. Let him be cool in action and in his mind.

CONCLUSION

Praise the players. They've saved the World, at least for the time being.

Although the characters themselves don't really have a period of respite before having to swim themselves topside and then hop into the volcano, the pacing of the story allows you and the players a bit of time to exult in the characters' successes. Stage a brief interlude that affords a symbol of hope—say, surfacing to a beautiful oceanic sunrise as the characters make their way toward their next goal, or the timely arrival of Captain Nestor at the surface on a jury-rigged raft christened the *Antilochus*. Things are about to become much more uncomfortable, and the Scions should at least have some opportunity to savor the victory they've just engineered against all of the forces arrayed against them.

STORY SEED: SWITCHING SIDES

It might come to pass that one of the heroic Scions meets his valiant end beneath the sea as the Band struggles to terminate the ritual for raising Atlantis. It might also occur that one of the rival Scions is taken prisoner in the conflict and, in the aftermath, realizes what horrific things he's done.

By way of atonement, this former member of the Shinsengumi might wish to cross over, fighting for the side of righteousness and good instead of continuing to be an agent of evil. This makes for a great way to keep the player of the now-deceased Scion in the game. The Scions of both sides are about the same power level. The erstwhile evil Scion has pre-built story ties to the cycle. What's more, the evil Scions will almost certainly want revenge upon their traitorous former member, giving you a great venue for future conflicts between the Bands.

Don't undertake this lightly, as it could require some additional rewriting of story materials in the future. On the other hand, if the circumstances are right for the change to occur, it's almost too good an opportunity too pass up. The redeemed villain is a powerful character in fiction and mythology, so if everyone involved wants to see it happen, make it work.

ACT THREE
A TIME FOR DYING

In this act, the characters make their metaphorical end-run around Mikaboshi's Titan eclipse, working their way into the Overworld by the back door connecting it to the Underworld.

Scene
INTO EREBUS
MENTAL •• PHYSICAL •• SOCIAL —

With what they know from the Oracle's prophesied warning and plea, the characters should head toward Mt. Erebus after completing the raid on Kane's ritual site. A bit of nudging or reminding might be necessary, especially if Act Two involved a number of extended game sessions, or if you built upon some of the suggested story seeds.

Such a reminder doesn't have to be heavy-handed, and it can certainly fit into the flow of the story or appear as a setting element. For example, the *HMS Erebus* was a British Navy bombardment ship refitted as an exploration vessel and used to survey Antarctica in late 1840 and again in 1842. After its Antarctic tour of duty, it was assigned to the Franklin expedition in the Arctic region, where it went missing. It was eventually found, abandoned and icebound near Baffin Bay. Lead solder on their food containers and scurvy are believed to have taken their toll on the crew, leading them to abandon the ship and its partner vessel, the *Terror*.

We're not making this up. Aren't *Erebus* and *Terror* great names for ships exploring the places men shouldn't dare to visit, only to be mired in death and insanity? Our hearts go out to the crews, of course, but the facts make for a gripping tale.

In any event, simply transplant the ice-locked hulk of the *Erebus* to the Ross Ice Shelf in Antarctica (as opposed to the Arctic, where it was actually found), and let that serve as a clue as to what the Scions are supposed to do next.

Naturally, you might wish to leave your own clues, or simply allow players who have their characters' duties firmly in mind to lead their Bands to Mt. Erebus.

GO WHERE, NOW?

The ultimate objective for the Scions, at least as far as Mt. Erebus is concerned, is the gate cavern far beneath the icy surface of Antarctica and deep within the fiery hollows of the volcano itself. More information on the gate cavern can be found on pages 137-138. The only difficulty is getting the characters there.

As with leading the characters to the volcano, a variety of clues can actually do most of the work, provided the characters are savvy enough to notice them. Failing that, a few more overt methods of delivering them to the gate chamber exist, but let's start with the subtleties.

• The Oracle told the Scions to "Follow the path down until it travels down no further, and then go deeper." What this means is that the gate chamber is absolutely the lowest point inside the volcano. Once they've reached that lowest chamber, "go deeper" refers to the passage from the World into the Underworld. Although they probably won't know the exact meaning of the Oracle's instructions, it seems fairly straightforward that they're to go down as far as they possibly can, and once they reach the volcano's lowest point, they'll be where they're supposed to be.

• The initial descent into the volcano is, unsurprisingly, a very hot trip. Characters who pay attention to the temperature will notice that, the further they travel, the lower the temperature drops. While it's never really "cold" beneath the volcano, the internal temperature is coolest in the chamber that houses the gate to the Underworld, which emits chilling gusts of otherworldly wind, as described on page 138.

Eventually, the characters should reach the gate chamber when you feel they've had the opportunity to do enough exploring to suit them. You might wish to add a few encounters with hostile entities or environmental hazards, if you think they'd enjoy that. They should also have the chance during the trip to learn that someone or something is following them, which is also discussed momentarily.

The arch of the sealed gate leading to the Atlantean underworld is described on page 138, and the characters should have little doubt what they've discovered when they finally make it to the chamber that houses the gate. From this point, it's simply a question of who wants to make the first daring step into the realm of the dead.

HAZARDS

It's not all tea and crumpets down in the fiery guts of Mt. Erebus. Any number of environmental hazards can pose threats to the Scions. While their nature as children of the Gods certainly gives them some degree

of resistance against natural hazards, the Scions can definitely be annoyed and even waylaid by features of the local geography with which man-shaped people just weren't meant to deal.

Darkness

While certain veins of lava might yield some ambient light, and occasional flame bursts forth from some stony vent or another, the volcano doesn't have much in the way of interior lighting. The characters will have to contrive a way to carry outside light sources with them on their excursion into the mountain, unless they can see in the dark.

Darkness poses a variety of environmental hazards. For example, darkness might occlude a jagged claw of igneous rock hanging perilously low in the tunnel. It could entirely hide a crack or chasm, into which an oblivious character might fall. It might even harbor living, unliving or legendary threats, should you decide to populate the volcano with conscious creatures.

Overwhelming Heat

The extreme heat contained within the geological furnace of Mt. Erebus is perhaps the greatest overt threat posed by the environment. Throughout most of the exploration, heat should be an omnipresent concern. Such oppressive warmth inflicts a -2 external penalty on all Stamina-related actions as it lingers and saps the will of people in the fiery depths of the mountain. Also, exposure to overt sources of severe heat, such as superheated stone or open flames, use the rules for heat damage as presented on page 184 of **Scion: Hero**. (For the more specific threat of lava and magma, read on.)

Lava and Magma

With the constant coursing of molten igneous stone through the bowels of the active volcano, occasional encounters with gouts of lava or hidden veins of magma are bound to happen. Immersion in molten stone is nasty stuff. It inflicts 10 dice of aggravated damage per action of immersion, and half of that for three actions after the immersed character escapes from it. Total immersion, in which a character is covered entirely by magma or lava (such as by falling bodily into a well of it) increases that damage, to 20 dice of aggravated damage while the character is fully immersed and 10 dice of aggravated damage for the three actions after he extracts himself. Damage caused by this liquid-hot stone is sure to leave some terrible scarring, as well.

Exploding Gases

As with immense heat and occasional escaping plumes of fire or melted rock, the gases trapped underneath the mountain that occasionally erupt on their own can pose a threat. These dangers work better as subtle or surprise threats, though, as gas is invisible. Open sources of flame can make the gases volatile—whether that's the ambient fiery atmosphere of the volcano, or from an archaic light source characters might be carrying. Whatever the case, experiencing exploding volcanic gases isn't much fun. The center of a gas explosion inflicts 10 dice of lethal damage on any character caught in it. For every five feet of distance from that explosion, subtract two dice from that damage for characters in that radius.

Chasms and Stone Formations

The inside of Mt. Erebus is a huge, natural geological formation, untouched by the hands of men with the intent of converting it to their own purposes. As such,

STORY SEEDS: WE'RE NOT ALONE

There's no guarantee that the characters are traversing virgin territory as they plumb the depths of Mt. Erebus. Any number of previous visitors might have wandered through its nigh-endless passages. Some of them or their descendents might still be down there, lurking in fear or with malefic intent.

- **Mythic Critters:** Mythology is rife with various denizens beneath the earth. The Scions might encounter creatures like the mountain-forge dactyls. Crawlies found beneath Mt. Erebus need not be of Greek origin, however. They could be Norse dwarfs, mentioned by the witch Voluspa, in reference to Ragnarök, that "Loud roar the dwarfs by the doors of stone, the masters of the rocks." Even creatures from unknown pantheons, such as the quasi-Greek Kabeiroi, the etymology of whose name is unknown and might even hail from Atlantis itself.

- **Atlantean Atavisms:** It could be that when Atlantis sank beneath the waves, a few of its drowning refugees managed to make it away from the city and escape into the wastes of Antarctica. Of those number, a few took refuge beneath the icy ground, eventually insinuating themselves into the network of catacombs and tunnels of the volcano itself. This is a good place to showcase some of the blind, albino, inbred remnants of a millennia-old civilization, skulking through the tunnels without need of light and inflicting a bit of horror upon the story.

- **Evolved Fauna:** Since men have never ventured so deeply into the depths of Mt. Erebus, we might simply have no idea what's down there. The warm, humid environment might host a micro-ecology of fungi and slimes, which are eaten by herbivorous rodent-type creatures, which are in turn eaten by larger scavenger-predators. It could be a whole "weird world" down there, with no real mythic resonance, having warped the indigenous animals into epic beasts or death-tainted monstrosities.

it abounds with natural features that simply occurred without the needs of men in mind. At certain points, the "path" through the tunnels might give way to gaping chasms. Formations of igneous rock or intruding ice could bar the passage and need to be destroyed or circumvented. Dangerous stalactites dangle from above, threatening to fall into the tunnel or even pierce unwary Scions. The exact nature of these natural hazards is up to you, but they can be represented by everything from a few dice of bashing damage to extended challenges pitting Strength or Dexterity against interior volcanic avalanches or fallen chunks of rock.

THE VICIOUS SHADOW

When the characters defeated Kane Taoka at the Atlantean ritual site, they crushed him through the surface of the city and into one of the lava tunnels or steam vents honeycombing the earth beneath the volcano. He survived, and in the course of his delirious journey toward whatever safety he could find, he came upon the same tunnels that the characters are using to descend.

Kane emerges after the characters pass, but he hears the sounds of their journey and recognizes their voices. He shadows them after that, trying to find out what they're doing. After all, if they're down here, and they've already accomplished what they must have otherwise been here to do—which was to hamstring his efforts to strike down Amaterasu, damn them—either they've found something important or are on the trail of something else significant.

For his part, Kane lingers far beyond the characters. He's observed that they're obviously headed downward, and he can follow them by the light they cast (or whatever other method is appropriate). His presence might occasionally be detected by a member of the Band with exceptional senses, or he might work better as a Storyteller tool to impart a sense of dread, or of the unknown following the Band. You need not make even the hint of his presence known at all, though, if it would distract excitable players who would then charge *up* the lava tunnels and away from the true objective. Whatever the case, he's there, he's following, and he's too tempted by power to ignore the gate once he finally finds it.

Scene

BEYOND THE VEIL OF DEATH

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL — SOCIAL •

Once the characters bravely pass through the gate beneath Mt. Erebus, they find themselves in a gray grove. Expanding around them in all directions is a desolate forest, its trees curled over themselves and as bare as those left by a harsh winter. The forest itself is a bleak reflection of the verdant flora that once grew abundantly on the Isle of Atlas, though it bears none of the fruitful bounty that paradise once enjoyed. This jungle is little more than a barren memory of that lost land, a dream without the grandeur. The characters' bodies are the only sources of actual color in the immediate vicinity, and even those seem subdued. Everything else is black, white or shaded gray.

The gate from beneath Mt. Erebus does not open from the Underworld side. That is to say, from this point, there's no way to go back through the gate. The first characters through the gate watch their companions appear as if from a "pool" in the air before a stoutly closed portal with no evident means of being opened.

The Atlantean underworld is a dead place, of course, an unnerving place to visit for those who (ostensibly) still live, but not a place of gory horror. The negative energy of death, but not evil, permeates this grove. Its sandy floors are made of powdered bone, which holds no nutrients and explains why the sad trees can find no life in the soil. No sun shines here, nor does any moon offer a sylvan gloaming—a featureless, gray light with no source offers some ambient luminosity, but it carries no warmth or health. Indeed, the air is cold and a bit humid, the sort of chill that climbs beneath the skin and causes shudders from within.

Two paths lead from the grove, at opposite points from each other in the small clearing. Tacked to a tree beside each path is an arrow. One of the paths is marked by an arrow pointing up, another by an arrow pointing down. The arrows are carved wood, each inlaid with filigree of some cold metal that glints dully in the wan light, done in a style similar to that of the Seal of Atlantis or any other Atlantean flourishes the characters would have noticed during their time in the sunken city.

NORTH AND SOUTH

The text specifically avoids mentioning whether the directions of the paths that lead out from the grove are "north" or "south" or any other cardinal directions. The reason is simply that the Underworld doesn't have those directions. It is a place without magnetic poles, so the cardinal directions don't refer to anything. Indeed, a character with a compass or some sort of direction sense would simply be unable to read the compass or get a "feel" for any relevant direction. Characters aware of things such as this should have an undeniable sense of disquiet, as if they're never quite able to get their bearings while in the Underworld.

THE UP PATH

Ultimately, the characters will want to choose this path, as the "up" signified by the arrow refers to ascending to the heavenly realms of the Overworld. Indeed, the path leads physically up, beginning first in a series of foothills after the copse of dead trees thins out, and eventually winding its way up a mountain that climbs into a cloudy sky.

This mountain in the Atlantean underworld is an aggregation of symbols formerly relevant to Atlantean society. It is at once the dead-world echo of Mt. Olympus (which Atlantis's proto-Greek culture revered as the home of the Gods), Mt. Erebus (which serves as a tombstone to their lost island and culture), and the "pillar of heaven" around which the stair to the Overworld literally winds.

The way to the mountain and the beginning of the stair is lonely and desolate. Characters who traverse the path find the way uncluttered but for desiccated brambles and vines that occasionally lie across the path. Even these dry scraps thin out the closer the characters come to the mountain itself.

At the foot of the mountain, where the actual stair begins, the Scions are met by a dark gray cloak. The cloak has no body within; it's just an animate shroud, serving as a director of travelers in the realm of the dead. As the characters stand before the cloak, tatters of its charnel fabric detach and flutter around them, flapping closely but never touching them. Eventually satisfied that the characters aren't truly dead and therefore need to progress in the "up" direction, the path guardian billows aside and the cloak flaps as if pointing up the staircase. Vigilant characters will note that there's no actual wind—the cloak and its tatters are flapping of their own accord, or in response to some environmental factor beyond the characters' ken.

THE DOWN PATH

The path marked by the "down" arrow is the one to be taken by those who arrive here in a true state of death, those who must travel across the river of the dead to their final place of rest (or restlessness) in the afterlife. The path leads out of the lifeless forest, down a muddy embankment where gray murk squelches beneath the characters' feet, and eventually all but vanishes on the stony shore of a vast, expansive body of what seems to be water. It's wider than the characters can actually determine from this vantage, but it's clearly a moving body of water, a river and not a lake. Gray mists linger over the surface of this river and the beach itself.

If the characters wait by the shore, a skiff appears before long from the lingering mists upstream. Piloting the skiff is Charon, or at least a figure whose purpose is similar enough that the connection can be made. (It's unknown if the Atlanteans had an entity who served the same function, so it's impossible for the characters to discern whether this is the "real" Charon, an Atlantean analogue or an altogether different entity.) Whatever the case, the boatman is a titanspawn who hasn't managed to throw off his prisoner's shackles and still serves his penance as dictated by the Gods. His job is to ferry dead souls across this river, Acheron.

If the characters were genuinely dead, this boatman would compel them to board his boat. Since they haven't yet met their legitimate ends, though, he has no sway over them or interest in dealing with them. To this end, Charon refuses to allow the characters to board his skiff. If they attempt to climb aboard, he'll force them back. He won't take payment; he doesn't even speak to the characters. Even if they do manage to bully their way on board, he'll refuse to pole, pointing them back toward the bank of the river. In fact, the only reason he showed up was out of curiosity. He hasn't seen anyone appear on this particular patch of Acheron's shore in eons.

If the characters do manage to enrage Charon into outright combat and defeat him, though, he'll be forced to accept their superiority and heed their demands. If they demand to be taken directly across the river, he transports them to the shores of the Underworld realm of Hades—which is where the Scions are decidedly *not* supposed to be right now.

Information on Charon can be found on pages 236-237.

WANDERING THE WOOD

Some players might get the notion of having their characters explore the vastness of the lifeless forest. That's sound reasoning, but it won't get them far.

The Underworld forest doesn't have a real-world geography, and natural laws don't apply to it. No matter how deeply the characters trudge into the forest, if they don't use the path, it takes only a single step to travel back from the depths of the wood into the clearing where the one-way gate deposited them in the first place.

Also, the trees in the forest aren't really trees. They're the memories of trees, the *ideas* of trees that would populate a place where the dead go to complete their dying. Looking at an individual tree doesn't give the impression of an actual tree, it simply gives the idea of a tree. Looking at any other tree yields the same result. The Scion who seeks a hidden path through the forest or who surveys the forest for what it is won't leave the task with a unique landscape in mind. He won't remember, "Yes, there was a tall oak with peeling bark there and a group of intertwined elms over there," he'll simply recall, "There were dead trees and then more dead trees and then more dead trees and then I was back in the glade."

THE EVER—UNWELCOME GUEST

The way the gate from Mt. Erebus works, those who pass through from the World side of the portal disappear into impenetrable darkness, transported wholly into the Atlantean underworld. Such being the case, while Kane waits to see what the Scions are doing in the tunnels beneath the volcano, he has no idea where they've actually gone or what they're doing once they get there. (Even his Night Eyes Boon can't pierce the blackness beyond the gate.) He might be able to guess at what's going on, but that and a dollar will buy a corrupt Scion a cup of coffee. Kane's own understanding of his adopted parent, the Titan Mikaboshi, doesn't include the similarities between Mikaboshi and the Titan Erebus (disparate aspects of the same Titan of Darkness), so Kane simply guesses that the players' Scions have gone... elsewhere.

That's a testament to the extent of Kane's depravity, as he's willing to follow them wherever they've knowingly gone while he remains ignorant—all for the sake of a bitter revenge. He gives the characters a lead (long enough that they won't notice him following), then he crawls angrily through the gate. Once he's through, he says a prayer to Mikaboshi, drawing the Titan's attention from its realm in the Overworld.

Scene

ASCENDING BEYOND DEATH

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL ••• SOCIAL —

As the Scions ascend the stairs, those watching the mountain's peak notice an anomaly in the Atlantean underworld's "weather." The murky, uneven clouds seem to swirl and darken around the apex of the mountain. The higher the characters climb, the darker the center of this growing vortex seems against the bleak sky. At a certain point, the clouds even part a bit to emit what can only be described as a black light tinged with violet. The very peak of the mountain vanishes into the star-speckled infinity of the violet space, and savvy characters will feel (rather than know) that they're looking at a portal into the Overworld itself.

If they can only get to it, they can reestablish contact with their divine parents at last.

DARKNESS FALLS AS LIGHT

The path leading up the mountain is a stony stairway that winds around the circumference of the mountain itself. Like the forest, most of the stairway is uniform, dreamlike and devoid of actual detail. Every now and then, however, the path wends through a tunnel carved

into the rock of the mountain, or the ascending stairs open onto a landing 10 or 12 yards across. In each of these tunnels or landings, a number of lanterns or torches have been arranged, each of them flickering with a flame of the same, cold, gray light that permeates the Atlantean underworld.

To the unobservant, there seems to be no mathematical reason to the number of lanterns present. The first tunnel has no lantern or torch in it. The second landing has a single lantern, and the second tunnel a single torch. The next waypoint has two, the next has three, then five, then eight, then 13, an on and on...

...in the Fibonacci sequence. In this sense, the mountain also represents the "mountain of cadence" discovered by the Indian mathematician and linguist Pingala. The mountain is literally the invocation of power itself, the calling down or bending to the will of universal force. As the Scions climb the mountain, they are making literal a metaphor of building nature. They are demonstrating their mastery over the universe itself, even if they don't know it.

Someone out there *does* know it, though, or, more accurately, some*thing*. Mikaboshi has heard Kane Taoka's call and homed in on his wayward Scion's location. From his vantage on the Overworld side of the portal, Mikaboshi dispatches a cabal of six sorcerers (his onmyoji) and a squad of 66 shinobi to extinguish the 28,657 lanterns and torches at the top of the mountain on its last landing. From there, his servants will descend to the next lowest waypoint and snuff the 17,711 lanterns and torches there. It's a time-intensive undertaking, to be sure, but it's a necessary part of his plan. If Mikaboshi manages to have his minions put out every lantern on the "mountain of cadence," he'll be able to force his will upon the entire Atlantean underworld. If he can do that, he'll be strong enough to absorb more Underworld realms into his own being. If he can claim dominion over enough of them, he can overtake the entire Underworld and make death synonymous with darkness and chaos. He can then merge the subsumed Underworld with the original Titan of Darkness (of which he is a discrete component) and attack the Overworld with renewed vigor and increased power.

(Originally, the plan was to subsume the Underworld thus from a different staging area after the Shinsengumi caused Fimbulwinter and cast the World into darkness. Since the players' Scions dashed the second part of the plan to pieces, Mikaboshi will just have to settle for accomplishing the first. All he needs is a few easy conquests of weaker Underworld realms to build up inertia. But now that Kane Taoka has drawn his attention to the Atlantean underworld—which is unpopulated and largely forgotten, yet still vast—Mikaboshi can gain a lot of ground quickly and build up a head of steam all the faster. With that opportunity at hand, the Titan can forgo the metaphysical eclipse between the World and the Overworld for the time being. Once he's subsumed the Underworld, he can reestablish it if he wants it put back in place.)

Cue action on the part of the characters. At some point, one of the characters should notice Kane creeping up the mountain, snuffing out the lamps. That same character, or one of the other Scions, should notice a weird group of six robe-draped, monk-looking dudes surrounded by a number of odd flickering shadows putting out the lamps above them and moving downward. The latter will actually be difficult to notice, given the angle of the characters' sight from below the onmyoji. Enough of the lamps and torches are mounted on the edges of the mountain's waypoints, however, that they'll at least see the lights going out and catch occasional glimpses of the sorcerers themselves. Even the densest Scion should be able to figure out that if Kane's doing it, then it's no good, and those monk-sorcerers are doing it with a sense of urgency.

Somebody must stop them! It's hero time.

ONMYOJI

These corrupted Shinto practitioners of the Onmyodo school of Japanese cosmology serve the Titan Mikaboshi in hopes of being able to direct Mikaboshi's forces of darkness and control against their own rivals. Needless to say, the Titan proved a greater force than the wills of these petty churls, but they come in handy for the Titan when he needs the black leaves raked in the front yard of his realm or the death-lights of the Underworld extinguished.

Obviously, the onmyoji are fanatics of the most dangerous sort, and they murderously take to whatever deranged task their master sets for them. They don't fear death, and they'd readily lay down their lives for Mikaboshi, thinking that they'll somehow be able to resume their grotesque vendettas on their own terms.

Seriously, just kill these guys. They'll do it to you if you don't do it to them, and it'd be far worse for everyone involved if they manage to get their way.

Mikaboshi has sent six onmyoji with 66 shinobi bodyguards (total, not each) into the Underworld to deal with the lanterns and torches.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2; Perception 2, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Virtues: Ambition 4, Malice 2, Rapacity 1, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Athletics 1, Awareness 2, Brawl 1, Craft (Alchemy) 4, Integrity 1, Investigation 3, Medicine 3, Melee 1, Occult 4, Presence 1, Stealth 1, Survival 1

Supernatural Powers:

Dominator's Subjugation of the Will: The Dominator's Subjugation of the Will is a burst effect that prevents those in the presence of the onmyoji from being able to use Willpower against the sorcerer. When one of the onmyoji uses this power, all characters hostile to the sorcerer within a 100-yard radius may not spend Willpower to negatively affect the sorcerer for the duration of the scene. (Indeed, many of those who repeatedly feel the effects of this power become powerless to act against the onmyoji even when he doesn't actively invoke it, so crushed are their wills.) The power requires the expenditure of a Legend point and a successful (Wits + Occult) roll.

Join Battle: 5

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 4, Damage 3B, Parry DV —, Speed 6

Unarmed Combat, Heavy: Accuracy 3, Damage 6B, Parry DV 1, Speed 5

Unarmed Combat, Light: Accuracy 5, Damage 3B, Parry DV 2, Speed 4

Ritual Dagger: Accuracy 4, Damage 4L, Parry DV 2, Speed 5

Soak: 1L/7B (Robes with perverse leather accouterments, 1L/4B, -1 mobility penalty)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 1 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 1 **Legend Points:** 1

Other Notes: None

KANE TAOKA

Kane's in bad shape right now, having suffered a drubbing at the Scions' hands beneath the ocean and then following them through the darkness of Mt. Erebus like a deranged Gollum from *The Hobbit*. That doesn't stop him from throwing himself at the characters, however, in a just-short-of-suicidal attack in hopes of preventing them from stopping the onmyoji's progress. It's just short of suicidal because he's not going to throw his life away here. He's not as deluded as the sorcerers, but he does want to make a show of his commitment to Mikaboshi and keep in the Titan's good graces despite his earlier failure.

In the time between Kane's defeat at Atlantis and his attack on the characters in the Underworld, consider Kane to have half his normal Legend points and three-fourths of his normal health levels. Full information on a healthy Kane Taoka can be found on page 296.

When the fight turns against Kane (and it will), or if he feels that the odds are simply too great (if, for instance, he sees all the characters thundering down the mountain stairs at once to pound him into glue), he'll run. He'll ultimately head back to the "down" path, to where Charon's boat still waits, and then he'll...

What? You think we're just going to tell you? You'll see Kane Taoka again soon enough.

Scene

TOE—TO—TOE WITH THE TITAN

MENTAL • PHYSICAL •••• SOCIAL —

With the portal to the Overworld open and the onmyoji doing their work on the lamps at the waypoints on the mountain, Mikaboshi begins to enter the Atlantean underworld himself, in preparation for the first stage of his certain victory. As the characters climb the mountain and see the sorcerers commencing their tasks, they'll witness what looks like a vast pile of guts made of shadows and darkness pouring into the sky above them from the edges of the Overworld portal. The turbulent organs draw even the non-light of the Underworld into them, making the whole environment a shade or two darker than it was before. As more of the inchoate organs pour through the hole between realms, the incomprehensible creature that is Mikaboshi gradually takes up the entire sky, with the exception of the open Overworld gate. It doesn't want its path between realms cut off when it's only halfway through.

THIS CAN'T BE GOOD

The situation seems dire, that's true. Fortunately, everything is going according to plan. This is exactly what the Gods want to happen.

Unbeknownst to the characters or Kane or Mikaboshi, the Gods intend to seal off the Atlantean underworld from the rest of the Underworld. (This realm is empty, and it hasn't had any new shades enter it since the nation was swallowed by the sea millennia ago. Not even the souls of lost Atlantis's warped, piscine inhabitants come here. So why not?) They've taken their first step already, turning the Mt. Erebus gate into a one-way valve that cannot be forced from the inside. Once Mikaboshi pours himself (and the greater Titan of Darkness of which he is a part) out of the Overworld into the Atlantean underworld, Hades will redirect the River Acheron to bypass the empty underworld realm altogether. At that point, the only way out will be the Overworld portal in the sky through which Mikaboshi just entered. That's the Gods' trap.

To a certain extent, that means the Scions were bait all along. Their efforts drew Kane here, and Kane drew Mikaboshi's attention from whatever other Underworld realm he had his eye on to the Atlantean underworld. If Mikaboshi had chosen a different underworld to be his staging area against the rest of the Underworld, the trap wouldn't have worked. It's a complicated plan in which Fate itself plays no small part, but the characters' small role is both integral and crucial. (And if your players have some sort of problem with that, you can always remind them that their characters just *saved the entire World* in the previous act.)

That aside, the story isn't over until the characters escape the trap themselves.

THE BAD WINNER

Once all of Mikaboshi has poured into the underworld, the Titan becomes the sky and now the river, and now the forest... His blackness coats the entire sky from bleak horizon to bleak horizon. The darkness covers the entire landscape as well and begins to work its way over the foothills and up the mountain. There's only one way for the Scions to go, and that's up toward the portal at the mountain's summit. Mikaboshi can't instantly snuff the portal himself, but he can slowly choke it down to nothingness until it collapses. Seeing this portal constricting and disappearing should be a clear sign to the characters that they have to get out of here—*now*.

Naturally, Mikaboshi doesn't want the characters to escape. If he can smother them inside himself, he can be free once and for all from their meddlesome efforts. Perhaps he can even corrupt them as he did with Kane, procuring more and more competent minions for the war effort. The first step in that direction is to capture or kill the Scions. As the characters race up the mountain, Mikaboshi births a handful of significant titanspawn to challenge them, hoping to delay them and negate their escape so he can deal with them at his leisure. If the titanspawn defeat and kill the characters, that's fine too. As long as they don't get away, he's satisfied. Fortunately for the characters (sort of), Mikaboshi's efforts to kill or capture them distract him from examining too closely the confines of his new realm.

The first thing the Titan does is raise up skeletal monstrosities from the splintered bone-soil of the clearing and beach and call forth a bigger one from the greater Titan realm of Darkness—to which Mikaboshi still enjoys a direct connection while the Overworld

STORY SEEDS: STAYING PUT

What if the characters choose not to take the portal into the Overworld because they don't know what it is? What if they feel overwhelmed and try to cut a deal with Kane or Mikaboshi? What if they decide to help the onmyoji?

There's plenty of potential for utter disaster at this stage of the story. As Storyteller, you just have to be flexible enough to see disaster as an opportunity. (In this sense, it's a lot like being a Dallas Cowboys fan.) Consider some of the potential acts of desperation that would turn the story around entirely.

• **Can't Beat 'em, So Join 'em:** If the Scions feel they can't win, especially with the seemingly impossible escape from the Underworld as Mikaboshi poisons it with his presence, the characters might decide to throw their lot in with Kane and the other formerly rival Scions. Mikaboshi would eat this up, but Kane would be furious and wouldn't trust the characters any further than he could throw them. (And he shouldn't be throwing anybody—he's injured.) This is perhaps the greatest challenge for you, because it negates the direction that the remainder of the **Scion** ready-to-play cycle is headed. Still, don't be afraid. In this case, the Scions who will be undertaking the duties that the players' characters should have taken will be the minor Scions from Act One. That should give the players some great opportunities for roleplaying, as their erstwhile friends have become the greatest obstacles to their success, and the lesser Scions who once looked to them as heroes now see them as despicable traitors. Adding complexity to this relationship is the possibility that one of the rival Scions of Kane's crew defected at the conclusion of Act Two and might now need to turn back to join him in Act Three. If any defections occur, the focus of the story will likely shift from divine duty to interpersonal relationships—but that's fine, given how much excellent storytelling can come out of these relationship dynamics.

• **Prisoners of War:** If the characters surrender or are otherwise captured, well, they're going to be in some dire straits for the time being. Mikaboshi wants them there, to either kill them or turn them to his own purposes. Since that doesn't make for a good story—"And the heroes all died"—a clever Storyteller can work out a way for the Scions to escape their imprisonment and then devise a scheme to smuggle them up to the Overworld. This would need to be another race against time, however, as it's only a question of how long before Mikaboshi finds out that his suborned underworld is actually an oubliette.

portal remains open. Traits for the less powerful skeleton monsters can be found on page 255 under the heading "Gashadokuro." Traits for the more powerful one coming from above can be found on pages 269-270 under "Daidara-bocchi."

The benefits the Scions have in this situation is that the titanspawn are coming from two different directions. Since the characters are closer to the top of the mountain, they'll probably be able to deal with Daidara-bocchi before the gashadokuro get near enough to them to threaten them. Also, you should gauge the outcome of the fight if, indeed, the characters face the titanspawn at differing intervals. If Daidara-bocchi proves to be a significant challenge for them, they could simply make for the gate to the Overworld instead of facing down the gashadokuro. This could prove to be a moral quandary for them, as well, as they don't know the Gods' ruse and might think they're failing their duty in leaving the tainted underworld and its rampaging titanspawn behind.

Additionally, environmental factors might prove to make things a little easier for the characters. Since Mikaboshi's titanspawn are giants, they're a bit ill suited to the mountainside path the players have used to make their way up the mountain. If the Scions use the mountainside to their advantage, both of these enormous threats will face a -3 external penalty to dice rolls made for them as they struggle for suitable footing. Any footing outside the waypoints that house the lanterns and torches imposes this penalty on the titanspawn. This tactic works somewhat to the titanspawn's favor, however, as the path is so narrow that they'll effectively block the Scions from passing them.

Allow the Scions to fight or evade the monsters as they see fit, and use the dramatic device of the closing Overworld portal to heighten the tension. Ultimately, the characters should make it through the portal, but in the time-honored tradition of escape moments before the exit route closes entirely. It's their choice: Stay in the place where Mikaboshi is irreversibly corrupting the environment or dive through the portal in the sky whence the purple-black cascade of divine power emanates.

Scene

IN THE GODS' GRACES

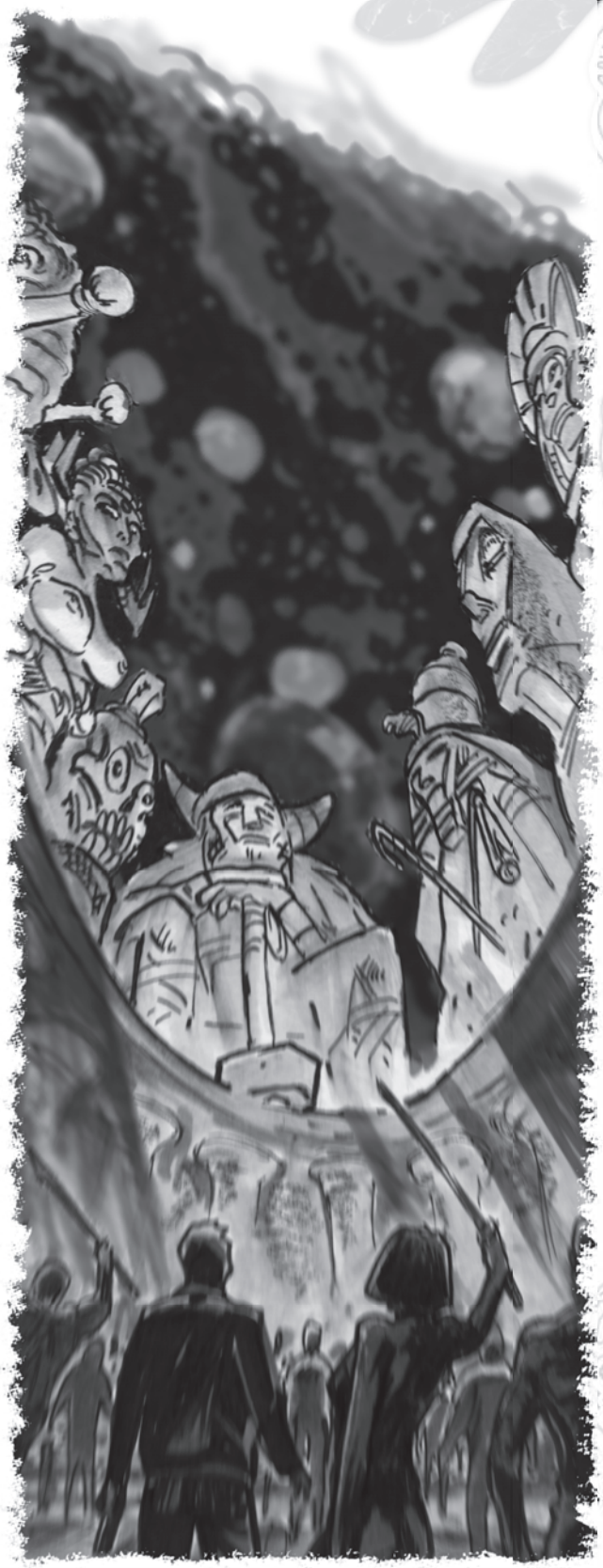
MENTAL • PHYSICAL — SOCIAL ••

The suffering is finally over, at least for now. The Scions have faced every test placed before them, and at long last, they have a chance to catch their breath.

The portal leads them through what feels like a tunnel, though it has no physical shape or length. The violet-black starlight streaks around them as they half-walk, half-swim through the surrounding colloid of power and exaltation. It's like passing through a gelatin miracle.

When the Scions emerge, the distending amoeboid tendril of starstuff deposits them in a marble circle similar to the tholos where they met the Oracle in Act One of "The Ragnarök Gambit." This time, though, the tholos is much larger and in far better condition. The marble gleams, and basins of water, wine and ambrosia stand at various intervals around the circular plenum. The sky is the most noticeable feature of this heavenly rotunda, though. Whereas the sky in the Underworld was a dull gray that eventually yielded to oppressive blackness, the sky here in the Overworld is a visible wonder of infinite potential. It's somewhat like looking at a satellite photograph of space, though the circumference of the sky is far greater than any photograph could contain. Wondrous planets orbit across the sky while an unfathomable number of stars glint and glimmer. Comets leave fiery, faraway trails and dazzling nebulae splash color across the vastness of space.

What's more, the characters' patron deities have all assembled here, seated on the descending steps of the circular tholos. Their heavenly entourages are with them as well. This is a heroes' welcome for the Scions, who have braved the horrors of the Titans and averted Ragnarök itself. The Gods rise as the Scions pass through the portal, applauding them, showering them with gems and ambrosia, gifting them with wonderful Birthrights and lauding them in the exultant words of poets.



MYSTERIES ANSWERED

After their ineluctable praise, the Gods explain the details of the Titan eclipse that dread Mikaboshi was able to perpetrate, as well as their own ruse to trap the Titan in turn.

Allow the characters to ask whatever questions they want about what went on. In response, give the answers from multiple Gods. Don't just say, "The Gods tell you..." and run down a list of bullet points. Assume some of the characteristics of the Gods in question. Even if those Gods are typically callous, distant or duplicitous, their children have achieved great works here and deserve the full praise of their sires. Indeed, the Gods are enthusiastic

at these results and rightfully proud of their get. (They're also extremely proud of their own cleverness in devising this whole complicated plan that's worked so well.)

This is your chance to show the players what's happening behind the scenes, and to show them how critically their Scions have affected the environment. Be careful with this: It can be tremendously empowering, or it can be utterly emasculating. The key is to show how the characters' actions have demonstrably enabled the World to continue and achieved a key victory in the Overworld War. What you don't want to do is make the players feel that their characters are simply dragged along in the wake of machinations greater than themselves.

This encomium goes on for as long as the characters enjoy being showered with praise. Don't cut them short by any means: The scene ends with the characters sitting down to a meal at the table of the Gods, which then "fades to black" until the next story of the trilogy. Let them bask in the sheer brilliance of their awesomeness. They've earned it.

STORYTELLER OPTION: NESTOR'S FATE

If you want, you can have Captain Nestor make a cameo here. If so, the captain sits on a stool at a podium, recording the tales of the Scions' exploits and the declarations of the Gods' favor for them. This doesn't necessarily mean anything symbolic—Nestor's just there as a thematic element or leitmotiv. Using him this way is a bit like combining Odysseus and Homer, the subject of the tale and the teller. Sure, Nestor is just the captain of the ship the characters took, but in his capacity as a legendary mortal, he's entitled to look on as the Scions' great works continue.

Tasting *Amrit* Again

The scene concludes as the Gods invite the Scions to sup at their table. A host of divine servants materializes out of the very air of the Overworld and sets an enormous banquet. Rhapsodes, skalds, bokors, or whomever might be appropriate to a character's specific pantheon all sing or recite as acrobats perform and sensuous courtesans mingle with the Gods and Scions.

The meal is easily the most delicious the characters have ever tasted, both because of the divine nature of the panoply of dishes and because, this time, the characters have earned it (as opposed to the way Kane Taoka stole it once before, using the Black Feather Shroud).

In this manner, the scene and the story concludes in a setting of great joy and promise. Whether that will continue as the Scions' journey toward divinity progresses, only time will tell.

CONCLUSIONS

In contrast to the end of "The Long Road to Heaven," the ending of "The Ragnarök Gambit" is fairly upbeat and doesn't leave the players' Scions in a sort of cliffhanger. This is intentional, because Storytellers are going to need a bit of room to plan before the story resumes in **Scion: God**.

The events of "The Ragnarök Gambit" were designed to bring the characters to the threshold between Legend 8 and Legend 9—i.e., the cusp of godhood. It's entirely possible that the players' characters didn't actually progress that far, particularly if you chose to run the story as written without adding any embellishments, such as those suggested in the Story Seeds sidebars. In this case, you might want to take advantage of the downtime between the adventures in **Demigod** and **God** to help push the players' Scions toward burgeoning godhead. Luckily, this book abounds with antagonists who are more than willing to step up to the plate and take the fight to the Scions. Also, any of the supporting characters introduced throughout "The Ragnarök Gambit" can serve as a hook to another intermediary adventure. Captain Nestor, for example, might need the characters' help in recovering his wife from some titanspawn that far outclasses him. The lesser Scions from Aeaeae might be in over their heads (again) and require the players' Scions aid (again). Indeed, this last might prove to sustain a short story arc between the published **Scion** adventures, giving the characters enemies to best and relationships with other Scions to cultivate.

Also along those lines, the Gods recognize that their Scions are on the cusp of godhead. If the Scions' relationships with their parents are good, this is an excellent time to investigate that mentor relationship from the other side. In such cases, the players' Scions, having effectively mentored the lesser Scions from Aeaeae, now find themselves once again in a position to learn, but this time directly from the Gods themselves.

Since the characters are earning their eventual apotheosis, most of the Gods (excepting only the most jealous or cruel) will probably look forward to the time when the characters are Gods themselves. After all, it never hurts to have a God nominally aligned with oneself, even if the individual in question is a God to begin with.

Therefore, the time between the adventures should be characterized by a guarded optimism. The Titans have been thwarted, even if only temporarily, and great things await the characters. By all means, challenge the Scions in the interstitial stories, but give the impression that everything's coming up roses for the characters. They've certainly earned it, and all too soon, they'll have their hands full of treachery and Loki's shenanigans again.

SCENE: OFF COURSE

MENTAL •
PHYSICAL •
SOCIAL • •

HINDRANCES

Various safety regulations and procedures might keep the characters onboard their vessel with their seatbelts on.

HELP

The confusion of the event means that characters can more easily escape notice.

STs	Deliver the characters to Aeaeae.
PCs	Get to Reykjavik. Failing that, the characters need to figure out where they are and why they were waylaid.

SCENE: THRILLING LOCAL WILDLIFE

MENTAL •
PHYSICAL • • •
SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

The basilisk, while the antagonist, is there to threaten the lesser Scions.

HELP

The lesser Scions will definitely contribute to their own rescue.

STs	Introduce the characters to the minor Scions and let them discover that hostile forces stand against them, even in this tropical paradise.
PCs	Defeat the basilisk and rescue the minor Scions.

SCENE: FORTUITOUS FELLOWS

MENTAL •
PHYSICAL •
SOCIAL • •

HINDRANCES

The characters must first learn of the Oracle then locate her.

HELP

The appreciative lesser Scions happily impart all they know about the Oracle.

STs	Let the characters learn that all Scions are unable to communicate with the Overworld, but that some force seems to be trying to correct that problem.
PCs	Find the Oracle and learn about their fates.

SCENE: THE WORDS OF THE ORACLE

MENTAL • • •
PHYSICAL •
SOCIAL • •

HINDRANCES

The imprecise nature of prophecy, the Oracle having not yet earned the Scions' trust and the disconnect with the Overworld keep the players suspicious.

At the Storyteller's discretion, a physical threat may occur, as well.

HELP

The lesser Scions' enthusiasm and the Oracle's few corroborating details should allay some of the Scions' doubts as to the Oracle's legitimacy.

STs	Deliver to the characters the details of their epic quest with all the gravity of Fate's decree, but while allowing players control over their characters' destinies.
PCs	Learn how to restore the connection between the World and the Overworld. Also, learn about Kane's treachery and the need to stop him in Atlantis.

SCENE: LEAVING THE ISLAND

MENTAL • •
PHYSICAL •
SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

At the Storyteller's discretion, environmental threats, pirates or a traitorous sailor.

HELP

None overt, though characters with Sky, Water or other Boons can expedite the trip.

STs	Give the players a chance to plan out the characters' next move.
PCs	Leave Aeaeae and find a port from which they can sail to Antarctica.

SCENE: PROVERBIAL ROCK AND HARD PLACE

MENTAL • • •
PHYSICAL • • • •
SOCIAL •

HINDRANCES

Scylla.

Charybdis.

HELP

Minimal. The scene is designed to showcase the Scions' abilities. Nestor's skill as a captain might be of some minor benefit.

STs	Deliver the Scions to Atlantis after they prove their mettle.
PCs	Find Atlantis to stop Kane's Ragnarök.

SCENE: STORMING THE GATES OF ATLANTIS

MENTAL • •
PHYSICAL • •
SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

Environmental threats such as extreme cold and atmospheric pressure.

The assumption that Kane's Band of Scions is aware of them is a mistaken but real hindrance, as well.

HELP

The fact that Kane's Band doesn't actually know the characters are there is an unknown but functional benefit.

STs	Introduce the characters to Atlantis, and allow them to plan their strike against Kane.
PCs	Scout Atlantis to learn how best to foil Kane's ritual.

SCENE: WATCHING THE WATCHERS

MENTAL • •
PHYSICAL • • • •
SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

Atlantean elites, their stable of sea monsters and numerous environmental threats.

HELP

The characters are individually more powerful than the Atlantean elites, so divide-and-conquer strategies are probably most effective.

STs	Challenge the players to think creatively in an uncommon combat environment and to "fight quietly."
PCs	Foil the Atlantean elites without alerting Kane's Band to the presence of the heroic Scions.

SCENE: THE UNRAVELING

MENTAL • •
PHYSICAL • • • • •
SOCIAL •

HINDRANCES

An entire Band of hostile Scions at about the same power level as the players' characters.

HELP

The element of surprise, knowledge of enemy logistics and the fires of righteousness. Hopefully.

STs	A climactic combat scene in which the characters' actions must prevent the literal end of the World. Kane should secretly survive.
PCs	Defeat the enemy Scions to prevent the coming of Ragnarök.

SCENE: INTO EREBUS

MENTAL	• •
PHYSICAL	• •
SOCIAL	—

HINDRANCES

The hazardous environment inside a fiery volcano.

Kane may also pose a threat, but he's keeping to himself for now, unless something outlandish happens.

HELP

The vague advice of the Oracle offers a minor bit of direction, but the characters have to mostly rely on themselves.

STs	Have Kane surreptitiously follow the characters to the Underworld gate.
PCs	Find the Underworld gate in hopes of reestablishing communication with the Overworld.

SCENE: BEYOND THE VEIL OF DEATH

MENTAL	• •
PHYSICAL	—
SOCIAL	•

HINDRANCES

The duplicitous titanspawn Charon.

Death, in the form of literally traveling to Hades.

HELP

A tattered shade serving as guide to the Underworld can direct the characters to the proper point of exit.

STs	Have Kane follow the characters into the Underworld.
PCs	Travel through the Underworld and exit into the Overworld.

SCENE: ASCENDING BEYOND DEATH

MENTAL	• •
PHYSICAL	• • •
SOCIAL	—

HINDRANCES

Onmyoji, shinobi and Kane Taoka, attempting to extinguish the lanterns on the mountain path.

HELP

Although it's cold comfort at this point, there's no outside help available because this is exactly what the Gods want to have happen.

STs	Allow Kane to escape, and have Mikaboshi's attempt to intrude begin (see Scene Four).
PCs	Stop the lanterns from being extinguished.

SCENE: TOE–TO–TOE WITH THE TITAN

MENTAL •
PHYSICAL • • • •
SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

Two gashadokuro and Daidara-bocchi.

Also, the only exit portal is rapidly shrinking.

HELP

The characters are small enough to fight effectively on the mountain, while the giant titanspawn are too large to fight very effectively.

STs	Complete Mikaboshi's seeping into the Underworld.
PCs	Escape!

SCENE: IN THE GODS' GRACES

MENTAL •
PHYSICAL —
SOCIAL • •

HINDRANCES

None overt, though some characters (or players) might feel resentful at being used.

HELP

None necessary; the Gods are all in attendance.

STs	Reward the players for a job well done.
PCs	High fives and maximum smooches from the Gods' entourages.

ANTAGONISTS

Things used to be so easy for you. A few measly frost giants, all dumb as hammers. A nemean beast from which you got that badass leather jacket. Even the tengu wasn't so awful once you got to know him. But that was when you were just a hero. Now, you're a demigod. Now, the real enemies start to come out and play.

COLOSSI

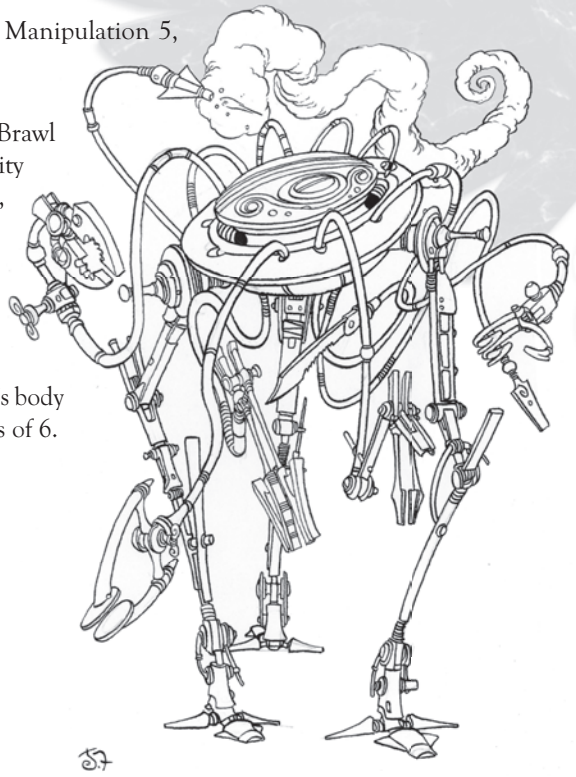
For Scions, the term "colossus" refers to a mechanical or otherwise artificial life form fashioned by the power of the Gods or their Scions. Despite the modern implication of the name, a colossus is not necessarily a huge creature, as the word *kolossos* merely meant "statue" in ancient Greek. Colossi may serve as antagonists, followers or even guides.

THE GOLDEN SERVANT OF HEPHAESTUS (RELIC ••)

Homer spoke of "golden servants" created by Hephaestus to aid in his work. Descriptions vary as to what these golden servants looked like, but when Scions of the Greek pantheon speak of them, they usually refer to the kind most commonly given to Scions by their Greek God parents.

Such servants take the form of six-inch-wide golden discs when not in use. When activated, each servant sprouts three tentacle-like legs that support it and permit it to move about. In this form, the servant appears to be a four-foot-tall golden tripod. The tripods also contain an additional dozen thin tentacles, each tipped with some type of common tool—a screwdriver, a hammer, a welding torch, et cetera. These servants are superb and speedy craftsmen, and a single golden servant can completely disassemble an automobile within about half an hour.

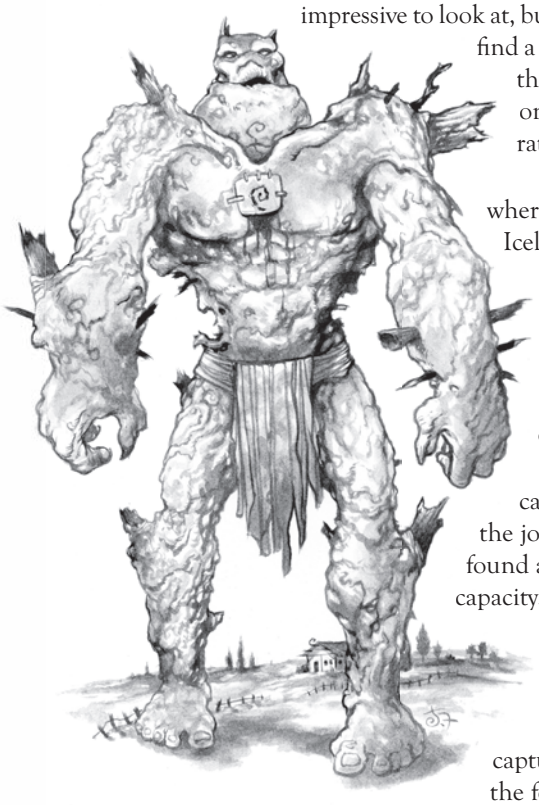
Other than a natural brilliance at all forms of craftsmanship (including contemporary forms such as computer repair), golden servants are fairly unintelligent and have the personality of a loyal and affectionate dog... that happens to be an expert mechanic. Golden servants have no significant combat skills, but one can be indirectly useful in combat (setting fire to an enemy with its torch, mass producing bullets for a Scion who is out of ammo, etc.). Golden servants cannot speak, but instead communicate with bells, clicks and whistles that their owners can intuitively understand.



Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5; Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 5; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2
Virtues: None
Abilities: Academics 3, Art (All) 5, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 2, Control (All) 1, Craft (All) 5, Empathy 3, Fortitude 4, Integrity 3, Investigation 2, Larceny 3, Melee 2, Occult 5, Science (All) 5, Stealth 2, Thrown 1
Supernatural Powers:
Boons: Arete 4 (Craft)
Golden Body: Each servant's body is fashioned from gold enchanted by Hephaestus himself. A servant will never wear out or break down unless it is deliberately damaged, and each servant's body has a natural soak of 5A/10L/10B, with an all-purpose Hardness of 6.
Join Battle: 5
Attacks:
Blowtorch: Accuracy 3, Damage 5L, Parry DV —, Speed 5
Drill: Accuracy 4, Damage 6L, Parry DV 2, Speed 5, P
Hammer: Accuracy 6, Damage 7B, Parry DV 3, Speed 5
Saw: Accuracy 4, Damage 10L, Parry DV 2, Speed 5
Nail Gun: Accuracy 2, Damage 4L, Range 3, Speed 4
Soak: 5A/10L/10B
Health Levels: -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/Destroyed
Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 6
Legend: 5 **Legend Points:** 25
Other Notes: None

MÖKKURKÁLFI

According to the *Eddas*, Mökkurkálfi (also known as "Mooncalf") was a clay giant of astounding size fashioned by the giants to aid in a battle against Thor and his allies. The great clay colossus was certainly impressive to look at, but it was crippled by an unfortunate design defect—the giants couldn't find a heart big enough to fully animate it. They settled for the largest heart they could find, that of a mare. Even then, Mökkurkálfi functioned only at a fraction of his potential might, and he was brought down rather anticlimactically with a single blow from the Scion Thialfi.



Their ranks broken, the giants abandoned the body of Mökkurkálfi where it lay, and time left the monstrosity buried within a glacier in Iceland. The Mooncalf lay there, helpless and inert, for untold centuries until six months ago, when surveyors began drilling in the area searching for hot steam vents for a new geothermal power station. The surveyors discovered what they first believed to be some type of Neolithic structure, but agents of the Titans quickly moved into the area, drove off the surveyors and began their own efforts to excavate the sleeping giant.

Of course, excavating Mökkurkálfi isn't particularly helpful if it can be beaten as easily today as it was all those centuries ago, but the jotuns (see p. 270) overseeing the excavation believe they have finally found a suitable heart donor to make sure that Mökkurkálfi works at peak capacity. They have captured a Scion of Odin himself, and if they can install the heart of a child of the All-Father into Mökkurkálfi's chest, even the Aesir will learn to fear the Mooncalf's approach.

Mökkurkálfi is completely inert until a new heart is installed. Assuming the jotuns are successful in installing the heart of their captured Scion, Mökkurkálfi will stand over 50 feet tall and will have the following traits.

Attributes: Strength 20, Dexterity 5, Stamina 20; Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1; Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 3
Virtues: Mökkurkálfi has no Virtues. He mindlessly obeys the instructions of any jotun who commands him.
Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Melee 5, Presence 3, Thrown 5
Supernatural Powers:
Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 6 (Crushing Grip, Holy Rampage, Hurl to the Horizon, Uplifting Might, Divine Rampage, Divine Wrath, Knockback Attack, Mighty Heave, Shock Wave), Epic Stamina 5 (Damage Conversion, Holy Fortitude, Solipsistic Wellbeing, Body Armor, Divine Fortitude)
Join Battle: 6
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 21L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P
Giant Club: Accuracy 11, Damage 31B, Parry DV 5, Speed 6
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 24L, Parry DV 4, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 21L, Parry DV 6, Speed 4
Soak: 5A/21L/31B
Health Levels: -0x41/Destroyed
Dodge DV: 7 **Willpower:** 0
Legend: 7 **Legend Points:** 49
Other Notes: Mökkurkálfi comes armed with a stone club roughly 25 feet long, which adds +10B to his Damage. Absurdly heavy and cumbersome, it is not an efficient weapon for anyone not a giant.

SHABTI
(CREATURE •, RELIC • OR CREATURE ••, RELIC •)

In ancient Egypt, as early as the 11th Dynasty, shabti were small figurines buried with the dead to serve the deceased in the Underworld and perform menial tasks on their behalf. Whatever benefits the shabti performed for their masters in the fields of Osiris, they offer more concrete benefits to modern Scions.

Shabti appear as small human-shaped figurines, most commonly designed to resemble mummies. A typical shabti has a visible and usually carefully crafted face and arms, but its lower extremities are less distinct, as if the figure's legs were bound together for burial in a sarcophagus. In fact, shabti were typically stored within small crude sarcophagi decorated to resemble the person the shabti would serve in the afterlife.

When deployed by Scions, a shabti appears as a simple figurine of wood, limestone, alabaster or nearly any other medium used by Egyptian artisans. Regardless of the medium, a shabti will invariably have spells from the Book of the Dead inscribed upon it. The Scion must spend a point of Legend to attune a shabti to himself, but this point may be regained as usual. After attuning a shabti, the Scion can simply call out to his servant, and the figurine will transform into a humanoid figure, about 12-inches tall, which resembles a stylized male Egyptian of the Dynastic Period wearing a linen kilt. At a cost of Creature ••, a shabti can manifest as a full-sized human being when activated.

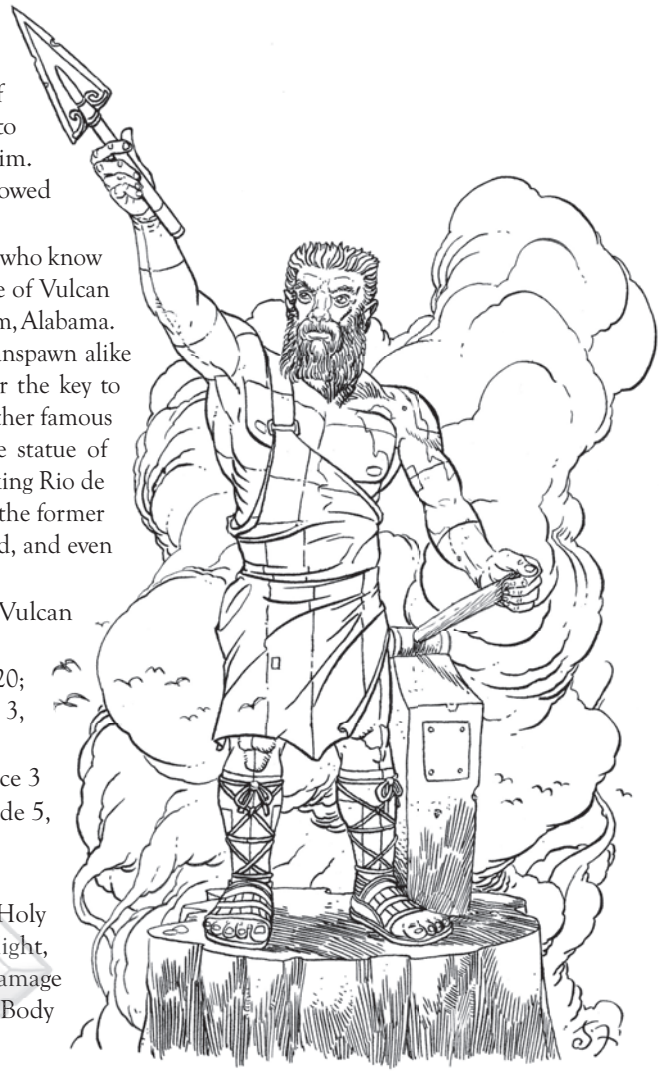
Shabti are never particularly combat savvy, and the smaller versions are also physically quite weak due to their smaller size. If either type takes enough damage to "kill" it, it reverts to its original inert form until a Scion spends another point of Legend to power it. Shabti are, however, relatively intelligent and quite agile. They are seldom useful in combat except perhaps as a distraction, but they make adequate menial servants.

The larger shabti have the traits of a generic mortal (see **Scion: Hero**, pp. 280–281.) The following traits represent the smaller shabti.
Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2; Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2; Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2
Virtues: Conviction 2, Harmony 2, Order 3, Piety 2
Abilities: Academics 2, Art (Any Single One) 4, Athletics 1, Awareness 2, Craft (Any Single One) 5, Integrity 3, Investigation 1, Larceny 3, Medicine 2, Occult 2, Science 3, Stealth 2
Supernatural Powers: None

Join Battle: 4
Attacks: None
Soak: 1L/2B
Health Levels: 0/-1/-1/Deactivated
Dodge DV: 3 **Willpower:** 5
Legend: 1 **Legend Points:** 1
Other Notes: None

TALOS

The talosi are gigantic war automata fashioned by the God Hephaestus. The original Talos appeared as a mighty bronze centurion of unimaginable strength that guarded the island of Crete. Talos's sole weakness was a nail driven into his heel, which contained the ichor that fuelled him. When the hero Jason removed the nail, the ichor flowed out, and Talos collapsed to the ground, inert.



In the modern era, the most famous talos (to those who know that such automata even exist) is the 56-foot-tall statue of Vulcan that stands atop Red Mountain overlooking Birmingham, Alabama. Over the past several years, numerous Scions and titanspawn alike have searched in vain across the American South for the key to activating and commanding the mighty iron statue. Other famous statues suspected of being hidden talosi include the statue of Christ the Redeemer atop Mount Corcovado overlooking Rio de Janeiro, the immense Motherland statues built across the former Soviet Union to commemorate the Battle of Stalingrad, and even the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor.

The following traits represent those of the Vulcan statue if it were animated.

Attributes: Strength 20, Dexterity 5, Stamina 20; Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2
Virtues: Expression 1, Intellect 1, Valor 4, Vengeance 3
Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl 5, Fortitude 5, Integrity 3, Melee 4, Presence 2, Thrown 4
Supernatural Powers:
Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 5 (Crushing Grip, Holy Rampage, Hurl to the Horizon, Uplifting Might, Divine Rampage, Shock Wave), Epic Stamina 5 (Damage Conversion, Holy Fortitude, Solipsistic Wellbeing, Body Armor, Divine Fortitude)
Join Battle: 4
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 21L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P
Hammer: Accuracy 10, Damage 36B, Parry DV 5, Speed 5
Spearpoint: Accuracy 11, Damage 25L, Parry DV 5, Speed 5
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 24B, Parry DV 7, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 21B, Parry DV 9, Speed 4
Soak: 5A/36L/46B
Health Levels: -0x30/Incap
Dodge DV: 7 **Willpower:** 8
Legend: 6 **Legend Points:** 36
Other Notes: Vulcan's iron construction adds +15 bashing and lethal soak.

DRAGONS

Of all the wondrous beings encountered by Scions, dragons are among the most complicated, confusing and terrifying. Difficult to categorize, dragons appear to be a form of early "proto-God" that never assumed a humanoid form, instead adopting a reptilian form venerated by ancient cultures around the World. Primarily, this archetypal form was drawn from the earliest primitive cultures, based for example, on depictions of the Titan Tiamat who was defeated by the Babylonian Sky God Marduk. As a result, many Scions tend to associate dragons with the titanspawn, but each dragon is a unique creature with its own agenda and nature.

Further complicating things is the fact that some ancient Gods appear to have "evolved" from draconic forms to human shapes, most notably Quetzalcoátl. Most depictions of the Feathered Serpent look very much like those of Asian dragons. Complicating things further still is the fact that modern Scions are generally ignorant of the history of dragonkind and often identify unrelated reptilian creatures as dragons. For example, lindwurms, hydras and coatls are often described as dragons by the ignorant. As a final source of confusion, many Gods and titanspawn have the power to assume a draconic form when entering combat. Quetzalcoátl still assumes his Feathered Serpent form when going to war, and many of the Amatsukami have dragon forms. On the other side of the war, the svartalfar Fafnir (see pp. 284-285) has the power to transform into a dragon form at will and typically does so when confronted by Scions.

In general, true dragons are powerful, intelligent beings, functionally equivalent to lesser immortals in power and nature save that their preferred form is that of a giant lizard or serpent instead of a human or humanoid being. Most dragons consider themselves to be separate from (and usually superior to) lesser immortals, though, and many consider themselves peers of the Gods. Dragons are a highly individualistic species. No two are exactly the same, and the species as a whole seems evenly split between the cause of the Gods and that of the Titans. Even within a faction, individual dragons vary significantly in their degree of loyalty and support.

Regardless, the chief indicator of draconic status lies in the creature's intelligence. While ignorant fools might consider any giant lizard or snake that comes along to be a dragon, true dragons never count among their number any creatures too stupid to communicate or to plan ahead. Among the different divisions of dragon-kind, gentility and erudition are prized attributes. Dragons on opposite sides of the God-Titan divide, such as the tatsu and the xuihcoatl, often approach each other as if they were close relatives divided by loyalty to rival sports teams rather than opposing warriors in an apocalyptic battle. Meanwhile, they treat their more brutish cousins (such as Ladon and Nidhogg) with patrician condescension. This "familial bond" is perhaps the reason why no one on either side of the battle fully trusts the dragons in their midst.

LADON, THE HUNDRED HEADED

A true titanspawn, Ladon decided very quickly after the defeat of his old masters that he would *not* follow them into ignominious captivity. As soon as the war started to turn against the Titans, Ladon sent secret messages to Hera, Queen of the Dodekatheon, offering to betray his masters to Zeus in exchange for protection and the opportunity to serve. The Gods of Olympus accepted, and after the war, Ladon became one of Hera's chief "hatchet men," destroying entire cities for the crime of displeasing the fickle Goddess. Eventually, she set him to guard the Garden of the Hesperides and commanded him to kill Heracles when the Scion of Zeus came to steal apples from the Garden as one of his Twelve Labors. While each of Ladon's many heads had a brain in it, however, none of those brains are especially big. Ladon was also more than a bit lazy. Rather than venture to the sacred Garden himself, Heracles tricked a discrete facet of the Titan Atlas into securing the apples on his behalf, and Ladon simply allowed Atlas to take them. Hera had given him no instructions regarding others who came for the apples.

Enraged at Ladon's stupidity, Hera stripped him of his station and confined him in the heavens within the constellation Draco. There he remained until the Titans broke free from their prison, at which point the great dragon returned to the World. He remains embittered at his centuries of confinement, but he is also unsure as to which faction he should join,

since both the Titans and the Gods have reason to distrust him. If given the opportunity, Ladon might give aid to a group of Scions in exchange for putting in a good word with the Gods. Unfortunately, he's just as likely to betray those Scions to the titanspawn if he can regain the trust of his creators by doing so. A living incarnation of selfishness and greed, Ladon will always do what's best for Ladon.

Attributes: Strength 12, Dexterity 5, Stamina 12; Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2; Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Ambition 3, Malice 2, Rapacity 2, Zealotry 1

Abilities: Academics 3, Animal Ken 1, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Fortitude 4, Integrity 3, Investigation 1, Occult 3, Presence 3, Stealth 1, Survival 4

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 3 (All Knacks listed in **Scion: Hero**), Epic Stamina 3 (All Knacks listed in **Scion: Hero**, plus Regeneration), Epic Appearance 2 (Dreadful Mien, Serpent's Gaze)

Extra Heads: Ladon has a myriad of multiple heads. Assume up to three heads at a time can attack any one human-sized target in close combat.

Tough Hide: All dragons are incredibly tough and resilient, doubling the bashing and lethal soak values obtained from Stamina before Epic Stamina is applied.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Bite: Accuracy 10, Damage 18L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Clinch: Accuracy 9, Damage 13L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Soak: 3A/16L/28B

Health Levels: -0x15/Incap

Dodge DV: 7 **Willpower:** 5

Legend: 5 **Legend Points:** 25

Other Notes: None

NIDHOGG

The Great Wurm of Norse mythology, Nidhogg lies at one of the roots of Yggdrasil where the World Tree passes through Niflheim. There, he's spent eternity gnawing ceaselessly at the root of the World Tree (ultimately in vain, as Yggdrasil is fated to be destroyed by Surtur instead). In fact, Nidhogg realized the futility of his task centuries ago, but remains unable to free himself from this compulsion. The Norns sentenced the dragon to this fate in the distant past, for some forgotten crime: to struggle pointlessly at an impossible task until the coming of the Ragnarök.

Of course, Nidhogg's obsession with the World Tree is not so complete that it dominates *all* his attentions. He has sired four children over the millennia: Graback, Grafvolluth, Goin and Moin. He sends these hateful spawn out into the World to do his bidding. His bidding is simple: Find the Scions of the hated Aesir, and kill them wherever you can.

Neither Nidhogg nor his progeny are truly titanspawn. Instead, they are a type of lesser immortal representing concepts such as decay and destruction but manifesting as serpents instead of human beings. The great wurms ally themselves with the Titans solely because they seek to unmake the World, and such destruction forms the ultimate expression of their existence. Nonetheless, Nidhogg is somewhat ambivalent about the Titans and their prospects for ultimate success. After Ragnarök, nothing will be left to destroy, and Nidhogg himself will be bereft of purpose. But while Nidhogg represents destruction, he has no desire to destroy himself. A clever, socially adroit Scion who exploits this conflict might be able to divert Nidhogg and his children from their current loyalty to the Titans. More likely, however, Scions will be forced to fight for their lives against the great wurm when their journeys led them into the underworld of Norse legend. (More information on Nidhogg and his post in Helheim can be found on p. 157.)

These traits represent those of Nidhogg himself. His offspring have similar traits, as explained in "Other Notes."

Attributes: Strength 18, Dexterity 5, Stamina 18; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2; Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

Virtues: Ambition 2, Malice 4, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 3

Abilities: Animal Ken 1, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Empathy 2, Fortitude 5, Integrity 4, Investigation 2, Occult 4, Presence 4, Stealth 3, Survival 4

Supernatural Powers:

Entropy Breath: Nidhogg can unleash a gout of entropic energy from his mouth at a target. The attack roll is (Perception + Athletics), adding a number of automatic successes equal to the dragon's Legend. The impact point explodes in a wave of entropy 10 yards across, so multiple targets can be struck by the attack if they are bunched together. The attack inflicts (Legend + 10) dice of lethal damage. Once the dragon has deployed its breath weapon, it must recharge for 15 ticks before it can be used again. The range of the attack is (Legend x 25) yards.

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 6 (All Knacks listed in **Scion: Hero** and in this book), Epic Stamina 6 (All Knacks listed in **Scion: Hero** and in this book), Epic Appearance 3 (Dreadful Mien, Serpent's Gaze, Compelling Presence)

Tough Hide: All dragons are incredibly tough and resilient, doubling the bashing and lethal soak values obtained from Stamina before Epic Stamina is applied.

Join Battle: 8

Attacks:

Bite: Accuracy 11, Damage 24L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Claw: Accuracy 9, Damage 27L, Parry DV 8, Speed 5

Entropy Breath: Accuracy 8, Damage 17L, Range 175, Speed 5

Soak: 6A/34L/52B

Health Levels: -0x31/Incap

Dodge DV: 8 **Willpower:** 7

Legend: 7 **Legend Points:** 49

Other Notes: Nidhogg's four offspring (Graback, Grafvolluth, Goin and Moin) are nearly identical to their father, just weaker. They share the same mundane traits, but their Epic Strength and Stamina are rated at 3 instead, lowering their soak to 3A/22L/40B, their health levels to -0x19/Incap and limiting them to all the Knacks for those two Epic Attributes that appear in **Scion: Hero**. In addition, they each possess only Legend 4, reducing their number of Legend points to 16, reducing the damage and range of their Entropy Breath to 14L and 100 yards, and dropping their Dodge DV down to 7.

TATSU
(GUIDE ••••)

The tatsu are Japanese dragons. The cosmology of the Amatsukami recognizes five elements: earth, water, fire, wind and void, with void representing the concept of "heaven." In Amaterasu's extremely bureaucratic approach to governance, the tatsu are assigned the role of representing the first four of those five principles in the World, with the Amatsukami themselves holding the status of "dragons of the void." As such, the tatsu may be best characterized as powerful lesser immortals whose true forms are draconic rather than anthropomorphic. The tatsu represent the building blocks of the World and are recognized as the earthly representatives of the Amatsukami.

Of course, the situation as it is recognized is often at odds with the situation as it is. Relatively few of the kunitsukami (see **Scion: Hero,** p. 297) recognize the tatsu as having any authority over their activities, and more than a few of the tatsu have severed their bonds of loyalty with the Amatsukami in favor of their own agendas. Indeed, a few have even betrayed the Amatsukami to join the Titans, such as the earth dragon Yamato no Orochi. The most powerful of the tatsu is the water dragon Ryujin, who was recognized by Amaterasu as the God of the Sea and the undisputed leader of the tatsu.

These traits represent those of an average earth tatsu. Luminaries such as Ryujin or Yamato no Orochi are far more powerful.

Attributes: Strength 12, Dexterity 5, Stamina 12; Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4; Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Virtues: Duty 3, Endurance 3, Intellect 3, Valor 2. These Virtues apply to loyal tatsu. Tatsu who have sworn allegiance to the Titans replace their Duty Virtue with Ambition 3 but retain the other three Virtues.

Abilities: Academics 4, Animal Ken 1, Art (Any One) 2, Athletics 3, Awareness 4, Brawl 3, Command 2, Empathy 3, Fortitude 5, Integrity 4, Investigation 2, Melee 2 (human form only), Occult 3, Politics 2, Presence 4, Stealth 2, Survival 3

Supernatural Powers:

Acid Breath: The dragon can unleash a spray of acidic sap from its mouth at a target. The attack roll is (Perception + Athletics), adding a number of automatic successes equal to the dragon's Legend. The acid inflicts (Legend + 10) dice of lethal damage. Once the dragon has deployed its acid breath, it must recharge for 15 ticks before it can be used again. The range of the attack is (Legend x 25) yards.

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 4 (All Knacks listed in **Scion: Hero**), Epic Stamina 4 (All Knacks listed in **Scion: Hero**), Epic Charisma 2 (Charmer, Inspirational Figure), Epic Appearance 2 (Dreadful Mien, Serpent's Gaze), Epic Intelligence 3 (Know-It-All, Perfect Memory, Teaching Prodigy)

Flight: Tatsu can fly at speeds of up to 200 miles per hour.

Tough Hide: All dragons are incredibly tough and resilient, doubling the bashing and lethal soak values obtained from Stamina before Epic Stamina is applied.

Join Battle: 8

Attacks:

Bite: Accuracy 9, Damage 18L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Claw: Accuracy 7, Damage 18L, Parry DV 4, Speed 5

Clinch: Accuracy 8, Damage 13L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Acid Breath: Accuracy 7, Damage 16L, Range 150, Speed 5

Soak: 4A/19L/31B

Health Levels: -0x18/Incap

Dodge DV: 7 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 6 **Legend Points:** 36

Other Notes: Convinced to become one by a Scion of the Amatsukami, a tatsu of this level of power would make a four-dot guide.

XIUHCOATL

The xiuhcoatl are a minion race of large dragon-like serpents created by the Titan Xiuhtecuhtli to battle the Scions of the Atzlánti. Each xiuhcoatl is an intelligent flying feathered serpent, closely resembling an exceptionally large specimen of the standard coatl (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 325). Unlike the flying serpents of Quetzalcoátl, the xiuhcoatl are highly intelligent and extremely powerful. Each xiuhcoatl can assume the form of a mortal while still retaining her draconic powers. Talented infiltrators, the xiuhcoatl penetrate the cults that support Atzlánti Scions with the goal of destroying them from within.

The following traits represent the average xiuhcoatl.

Attributes: Strength 10, Dexterity 5, Stamina 10; Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4; Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Ambition 3, Malice 3, Rapacity 2, Zealotry 3

Abilities: Academics 2, Animal Ken 3, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Command 2, Empathy 1, Fortitude 3, Integrity 4, Investigation 2, Occult 3, Politics 1, Presence 2, Stealth 3, Survival 2

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 4 (all Knacks listed in **Scion: Hero**), Epic Stamina 4 (all Knacks listed in **Scion: Hero**), Epic Appearance 2 (Dreadful Mien, Serpent's Gaze)

Fire Breath: The dragon can unleash a gout of fire from its mouth at a target. The attack roll is (Perception + Athletics), adding a number of automatic successes equal to the dragon's Legend. The impact point explodes in a ball of flame 10 yards across, so multiple targets can be struck by the attack if they are bunched together. The fiery breath inflicts (Legend + 10) dice of lethal damage. Once the dragon has deployed its fire weapon, it must recharge for 15 ticks before it can be used again. The range of the attack is (Legend x 25) yards.

Tough Hide: All dragons are incredibly tough and resilient, doubling the bashing and lethal soak values obtained from Stamina before Epic Stamina is applied.

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Bite: Accuracy 10, Damage 16L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Clinch: Accuracy 9, Damage 11L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy (mortal form only): Accuracy 8, Damage 14L, Parry DV 4, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light (mortal form only): Accuracy 10, Damage 11L, Parry DV 5, Speed 4

Fire Breath: Accuracy 8, Damage 15L, Range 125, Speed 5

Soak: 4A/17L/27B

Health Levels: -0x22/Incap

Dodge DV: 7 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 5 **Legend Points:** 25

Other Notes: None

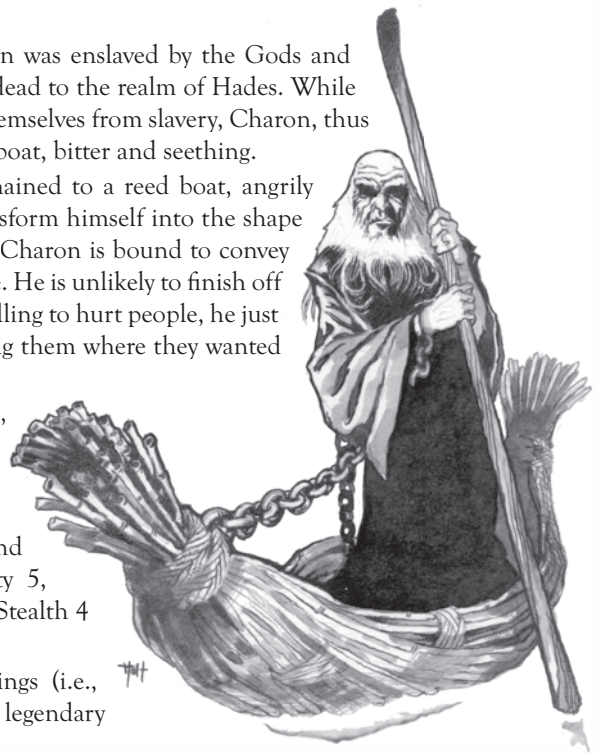
LESSER IMMORTALS

Lesser immortals are de facto deities excluded from the ruling hierarchies of the great pantheons. While a number of lesser immortals are described in **Scion: Hero** beginning on page 295, those listed here are much more powerful and are potential threats to demigods or even the Gods themselves.

All lesser immortal antagonists listed here and in **Scion: Hero** enjoy the non-aging effects of immortality and are likewise immune to the ravages of disease and other health problems. They share this effective immortality with demigod Scions, regardless of their given Legend ratings. Others are also gifted with a limited invulnerability on top of their immortality. The former quality is not listed with individual antagonists' write-ups, though the latter is—along with any special condition that trumps the invulnerability.

CHARON

The titanspawn offspring of Erebus and Nyx, Charon was enslaved by the Gods and condemned to spend eternity conveying the souls of the dead to the realm of Hades. While a great many titanspawn who were so bound have freed themselves from slavery, Charon, thus far hasn't been so lucky. He remains shackled to his reed boat, bitter and seething.



Charon appears as an elderly man in black robes chained to a reed boat, angrily clutching a pole. If moved to defend himself, he can transform himself into the shape of winged demon armed with a double-headed hammer. Charon is bound to convey across the River Acheron anyone who defeats him in battle. He is unlikely to finish off anyone he defeats in battle, though. It's not that he's unwilling to hurt people, he just doesn't like having to give bullies the satisfaction of taking them where they wanted to go in the first place.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 6, Stamina 5; Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Appearance 0; Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Ambition 2, Malice 4, Rapacity 1, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Brawl 4, Command 2, Control (Boat) 5, Empathy 3, Fortitude 4, Integrity 5, Investigation 2, Melee 5, Occult 4, Politics 2, Presence 3, Stealth 4

Supernatural Powers:

Death Touch: Charon's slightest touch slays mortal beings (i.e., beings without a Legend rating). Against Scions and other legendary beings, Charon's attacks inflict aggravated damage.

Demonic Visage: By spending a single Legend point, Charon can assume the form of a powerful winged demon. Yet he can do so only when physically attacked or threatened. In his demonic form, Charon has wings and can fly (theoretically at speeds of up to 100 miles per hour, although he is bound to remain near his reed boat). He gains the equivalent of Epic Strength 6, Epic Dexterity 6 and Epic Stamina 6, although he gains none of the Knacks associated with those Epic Attributes. He also gains the effect of the Dreadful Mien Knack, which is constantly active and costs nothing.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Charon's Hammer: Accuracy 13, Damage 15A, Parry DV* 6 (22 in demonic form), Speed 6

Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 7A, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 10A, Parry DV* 4 (20 in demonic form), Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 7A, Parry DV* 6 (22 in demonic form), Speed 4

* Whenever Charon successfully parries an unarmed close-combat attack either unarmed or with his hammer, he automatically and reflexively inflicts two dice of aggravated damage on his attacker.

Soak: 3L/5B (in his normal form), 6A/19L/21B (in demonic form)

Health Levels: -0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap (-0x28/Incap in demonic form)

Dodge DV: 8 (24 in demonic form) **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 7 **Legend Points:** 49

Other Notes: Charon's hammer has the following traits: Accuracy +2, Damage +8A, Defense +1, Speed 6. Also, the hammer is supernaturally attuned to Charon, which allows him to ignore the normal penalty for taking two attacks (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 179).

CIRCE
(GUIDE •••••)

The legendary Circe is among the most powerful and unusual of the titanspawn. Created directly from the union of the Titan Helios and the nymph Perse, Circe was born fully grown into the form of one of the World's most beautiful women. An equal to all but the most powerful of the Greek Gods, Circe's incredible powers were limited by only three potent weaknesses. The most important was location—after Helios and the other Titans were overthrown, the Gods bound Circe to the island of Aeaea, rendering her unable to use any of her powers while off the island's shores. Second, Circe was and is vulnerable to moly, a rare herb that apparently grows only on the island of Aeaea. Any mortal who carries even a sprig of moly on his person is completely immune to Circe's powers, and Circe can be slain by a weapon that has been immersed in the herb's juices.

Circe's third weakness is emotional. After centuries of enforced isolation, the titanspawn suffers from a profoundly overactive libido and is prone to literally falling in love at first sight. Whenever she's confronted with a group of males (even mortals), Circe has a strong chance to fall in love with whichever one has the highest Appearance. If one of the males is a Scion with any degree of Epic Appearance, Circe will almost certainly fall in love with him, although having such a powerful but unbalanced suitor is definitely a double-edged sword for all but the most experienced Scions.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5; Charisma 6, Manipulation 6, Appearance 8; Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Virtues: Expression 3, Intellect 4, Valor 2, Vengeance 4

Abilities: Academics 4, Animal Ken 3, Art (Painting) 1, Athletics 2, Awareness 4, Brawl 2, Command 4, Craft (Herbalism) 5, Empathy 5, Fortitude 4, Integrity 3, Investigation 3, Marksmanship 4, Medicine 5, Melee 2, Occult 5, Politics 3, Presence 4, Stealth 2, Survival 3, Thrown 1

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Magic 7, Mystery 7, Prophecy 7

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 3, Epic Dexterity 3, Epic Stamina 3, Epic Charisma 5, Epic Manipulation 5, Epic Appearance 6, Epic Perception 2, Epic Intelligence 2, Epic Wits 4. Ancient and insanely powerful, Circe has every

Knack contained in this book and in **Scion: Hero**, although she rarely condescends to fight her enemies through physical combat**.**

Invulnerability: When she is on her island, Circe takes no damage from any source unless it's inflicted by someone with a Legend rating equal to or higher than her own. Creative uses of the herb moly can circumvent this protection, as can luring Circe off her island.

Potions: Circe's command of her island's mundane and magical resources is such that she can brew potions with effects that can duplicate any non-pantheon-specific Boon in this book or in **Scion: Hero**. If the effect has an activation roll, a single roll covers every dose of the potion brewed in that batch. If a character consumes one of these potions, his player rolls (Stamina + Fortitude) against the activation roll of the mimicked effect.

Spells: Basically every spell ever invented that is conceivably available to a character with Magic 7. In addition to normal Fate-shaping spells, assume Circe has access to spells that can duplicate any non-pantheon-specific Boon in this book or in **Scion: Hero.** She can also cast a spell that bends light such that the target of the spell is invisible to anyone whose legend is lower than her own. Such a spell protects her island from casual discovery.

Wand of Transformation: Circe's wand allows her to transform humans into animals of any sort. The player of any character Circe touches with her wand must roll (Stamina + Integrity + Legend) against a difficulty equal to her Legend rating. The characters of those who fail this role are transformed into whatever type of animal Circe desires. Furthermore, all such animals are docile (including "wild" animals such as lions and bears) and completely obedient to Circe. For mortals, this transformation is permanent unless Circe undoes the enchantment. Players of Scions have the opportunity to reroll their characters' (Stamina + Integrity + Legend) every 24 hours until they break the spell. Transforming a single being costs one Legend point. Circe's wand is *not* a Birthright item. It functions for Circe alone, and outside of her hands, it has no magical properties whatsoever. Even better, Circe can still transform people into animals *without* the wand if she uses the Transform Person spell (see pp. 98-99). It just costs more Legend to do so and Fatebinds the victim to her.

Join Battle: 8

Attacks: None, physically. Circe will seldom engage in physical combat, almost always opting to rely on her magical powers.

Soak: 3A/7L/9B

Health Levels: -0x10/Incap

Dodge DV: 8 **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 8 **Legend Points:** 64

Other Notes: Circe would make a five-dot guide were she convinced by a handsome Scion of the Dodekatheon to become one.

THE FURIES

Also called the Erinyes or the Eumenides, the Furies are a trio of Goddesses charged with punishing mortals who engage in certain sins. Technically, the three sisters—Alecto, Magaera and Tisiphone—are considered titanspawn, as they sprang from the blood of Ouranos when he was castrated by his son Cronus. Regardless of their pedigree, however, the Furies nominally support the Gods, or else simply don't care which group rules the Overworld as long as they three are permitted to fulfill their own mad desires.

The Furies are the material representation of the concept of revenge masquerading as justice. As such, the standards by which they choose to act are difficult to discern. Their treatment of Orestes was typical of their modus operandi. Orestes was charged by the Gods to avenge his father Agamemnon's death, only to discover that Agamemnon was actually murdered by Clytemnestra (Orestes' mother). Orestes followed the command of the Gods and killed Clytemnestra, only to be tormented for the rest of his life by the Furies for his matricide.

In modern times, the Furies stalk the World as imperious monsters, inflicting madness and torment on mortals for such "sins" as leaving one's abusive spouse, exposing one's own father as a child molester, and even reporting the criminal conduct of one's boss. Whether such actions are "just" or not is irrelevant to the Furies. All that matters is whether the

offender violated his or her duty as a spouse, a loyal son, or an obedient servant. Furies rarely involve themselves directly with Scions except when one has committed some sin (imagined or not) that falls under the Furies' self-appointed purview, most commonly the killing of a family member or spouse.

In their true form, the Furies appear as three women, each of whom would be striking but for the writhing snakes intertwined with her hair. Each Fury also has a set of black wings and usually carries a braided whip or some other instrument of torture. Naturally, however, each of the Furies can disguise herself as a mortal to conceal her identity. The personalities of each of the three are quite different. **Alecto** resides in New York City, where she lives the life of a tabloid gossip columnist named Judith Marx, whose acid tongue drives young starlets to tears, rehab and, occasionally, suicide. **Magaera** lives in Tempe, Arizona, where she works as a licensed bounty hunter named Megan Reese. **Tisiphone** lives on a small island in the Bahamas under the pseudonym Mistress Sephira, where she serves as an expensive (but still much in demand) dominatrix for the jet set elite.

Beyond their personality differences, each of the three is functionally identical.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5; Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 5; Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Expression 2, Intellect 2, Valor 4, Vengeance 5

Abilities: Academics 2, Animal Ken 1, Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Brawl 5, Command 3, Empathy 3, Fortitude 5, Integrity 5, Investigation 2, Larceny 1, Marksmanship 4, Medicine 2, Melee 4, Occult 4, Politics 1, Presence 4, Stealth 2, Survival 3, Thrown 4

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Dream Wrack, Guilt Apparitions, Judgment, Psychic Prison, Scarlet Letter

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 3 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**), Epic Dexterity 5 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**, plus Ricochet Symphony), Epic Stamina 4 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**, plus Body Armor), Epic Appearance 3 (Compelling Presence, Dreadful Mien, Serpent's Gaze), Epic Perception 2 (Predatory Focus, Supernal Hunter), Epic Wits 3 (Cobra Reflexes, Eternal Vigilance, Opening Gambit)

Flight: Each Fury can fly at five times its normal movement rate, applying the normal DV penalties for Move and Dash actions in combat. Out of combat, one can fly at about 40 miles per hour.

The Joining of the Sisters: Any one of the Furies can issue a mental summons to her sisters at no cost. Any Fury can instantly teleport to the side of a sister who issued a summons at the cost of one Legend point, no matter where in the World (or out of it) that sister is located.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 6L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 9B, Parry DV 15, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 6B, Parry DV 17, Speed 4

Whip: Accuracy 12, Damage 11L, Parry DV —, Speed 3

Soak: 4A/10L/12B

Health Levels: -0x13/Incap

Dodge DV: 20 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 8 **Legend Points:** 64

Other Notes: Each of the Furies carries a whip with the following traits: Accuracy +3, Damage +5L, Speed 3. It cannot be used for defense, but it grants its user +5 on all attempts to disarm or entangle another.

INARI
(GUIDE •••••)

The God/Goddess Inari is one of the strangest and most mysterious of the kunitsukami. In modern Shintoism, Inari is both the God of rice and the Goddess of food. Inari is not a hermaphrodite, however. He/she has two separate and apparently co-equal identities, and while both accept worship under that name, each seems to consider itself a separate entity. How this unusual state of affairs came about is a mystery except to the wisest Amatsukami, and even they seem to disagree on the subject. Some say that Inari is the bastard offspring of a Japanese fertility Goddess and a Scion of Susano-o. Others say that Inari was a mortal who married the Fertility Goddess Uke Mochi. After his bride was murdered by the Moon God Tsuki-Yomi, the grief-stricken Inari assumed his wife's identity. Still others say that Inari is a unique creation, borne of the physical union of the Buddhist Goddess Dakini and the Japanese Fertility God Mahakala.

Inari's goals and even the extent of his/her power are just as inscrutable. He/she is known to have power over all kitsune, both good and evil, although he/she never seems to favor one type over the other. He/she also seems to have power over Fertility commensurate with those of the most powerful Amatsukami deities, although he/she has no interest in taking a place at Amaterasu's court. Some of the more paranoid Amatsukami claim that Inari is actually a titanspawn deep undercover who guides the kitsune in some elaborate plot against the Gods. Others whisper an even more frightening theory—that Inari is nothing less than an aspect of Fate, and the kitsune, through their chaotic pranks, help transmute his/her wishes into destiny itself.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 5, Stamina 6; Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 5; Perception 5, Intelligence 6, Wits 5

Virtues: Duty 4, Endurance 5, Intellect 4, Valor 3

Abilities: Academics 4, Animal Ken 3, Art (Calligraphy) 4, Athletics 5, Awareness 5, Brawl 3, Command 3, Craft (Swordcraft) 3, Empathy 4, Fortitude 4, Integrity 5, Investigation 4, Larceny 5, Marksmanship 4, Medicine 4, Melee 5, Occult 5, Politics 3, Presence 3, Stealth 5, Survival 3, Thrown 2

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Accelerate Growth, Animal Aspect (Fox), Animal Command (Fox), Animal Communication (Fox), Bless or Blight, The Blinded Spirit, Cleanse, Green Thumb, The Helpful Spirit, The Impressed Spirit, Natural Camouflage, Ride Animal (Fox), The Summoned Spirit, The Wakeful Spirit, The Watchful Spirit

Epic Attributes: Epic Dexterity 5, Epic Stamina 6, Epic Charisma 5, Epic Manipulation 5, Epic Appearance 6, Epic Wits 6. Inari possesses every appropriate Knack from this book and from **Scion: Hero**.

Shapeshifting: Inari can assume any human or animal form he/she can imagine simply by expending a Legend point. No roll is required, although Inari can never assume the form of a being with a higher Epic Appearance than him/herself.

Join Battle: 10

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 8, Damage 5B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Katana: Accuracy 14, Damage 12L, Parry DV 18, Speed 5

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 7, Damage 8B, Parry DV 14, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 9, Damage 5B, Parry DV 16, Speed 4

Daikyu: Accuracy 11, Damage 8L, Range 300, Speed 4

Soak: 6A/19L/22B

Health Levels: -0x22/Incap

Dodge DV: 20 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 7 **Legend Points:** 49

Other Notes: Inari's relic daikyu has a range of 300 yards, adds +2 Accuracy and has a Speed of 4. In addition to normal arrows, Inari can choose to shoot magical arrows that inflict no damage but make the target fall madly in love with the next person she sees (as per Donnie Rhodes' pistol Eros). The target must roll (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) versus Inari's successes on the attack roll plus her Legend. Inari's relic katana has +4 Accuracy, +7L Damage and +3 Defense. Inari would make a five-dot guide for an Amatsukami Scion, were he/she inclined to become one.

ITZPAPALOTL

Itzpapalotl, the Obsidian Butterfly, is the ruler of the Aztec terra incognita Tomoanchan. Gifted with the power to create new life with a thought and cursed with the power to kill whatever she touches, Itzpapalotl has spent untold centuries in isolation and solitude, only recently broken by her love affair with a mysterious stranger to her domain named Simurgh. Emotionally crippled by her loneliness, Itzpapalotl was easy prey for the seductive and preternaturally handsome Simurgh, so much so that, after years together, she still doesn't realize that he is titanspawn. What's worse, she wouldn't care if she did know, as her love for him would lead her to sacrifice all the new life she has created for just another caress. For more information on Itzpapalotl and Tomoanchan, see pages 125–127.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5; Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 0; Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 2

Virtues: Conviction 4, Courage 3, Duty 3, Loyalty 2

Abilities: Academics 3, Animal Ken 5, Art (Scarification) 2, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Command 2, Craft (Life) 5, Fortitude 4, Integrity 1, Investigation 2, Marksmanship 1, Medicine 5, Melee 2, Occult 4, Politics 1, Stealth 1, Survival 2

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Combat Sacrifice, Maguey Sting, Obsidian Excruciation, Obsidian Mutilation

Death Touch: Itzpapalotl's merest touch inflicts aggravated damage equal to her Legend. When she actively attempts to harm someone, her claw and wing attacks inflict aggravated damage with a damage bonus equal to her Legend rating. Consequently, Itzpapalotl can kill all but the hardiest of creatures with a single good blow.

This power also serves as a defensive system. Anyone who attacks Itzpapalotl in melee combat, either hand-to-hand or with a weapon automatically takes a number of dice of aggravated damage equal to half the damage inflicted on her (regardless of damage type). Only ranged attacks can be made against Itzpapalotl without risk to the attacker.

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 3 (Crushing Grip, Hurl to the Horizon, Uplifting Might), Epic Dexterity 2 (Cat's Grace, Lightning Sprinter), Epic Stamina 3 (Regeneration, Self-Healing, Skin-Shedding), Epic Appearance 3 (Compelling Presence, Dreadful Mien, Serpent's Gaze)

Join Battle: 5

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 8, Damage 13A, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 7, Damage 16A, Parry DV* 5, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 9, Damage 13A, Parry DV* 7, Speed 4

Quauhololli: Accuracy 9, Damage +15A, Parry DV* 8, Speed 5, P

* Whenever Itzpapalotl successfully parries an unarmed close-combat attack, she automatically and reflexively inflicts six dice of aggravated damage on her attacker, reduced by the attacker's aggravated soak, if any.

Soak: 3A/7L/9B

Health Levels: -0x6/Incap

Dodge DV: 9 **Willpower:** 7

Legend: 6 **Legend Points:** 36

Other Notes: None

NURARIHYON
(GUIDE ••••)

Nurarihyon is the unquestioned leader of the Japanese yokai (a subset of kunitsukami roughly comparable to alfar and nymphs). Indeed, this venerable yokai is renowned among all his people for his wisdom, insight and sagacity, and in these dark times when Horai, the kingdom of the yokai is under siege, all of Nurarihyon's people look to him for his sage leadership. A pity, then, that Nurarihyon is an utter charlatan.

It's not malice on Nurarihyon's part, of course; he really can't help himself. When the Gods divided up dominion over the Ten Thousand Things, Nurarihyon was appointed to represent the concept of wisdom accumulated by age, a concept important to Amaterasu's ancestor-focussed society. The possibility that with age might come stubbornness and a refusal to consider new ideas, all masquerading as wisdom, was not something the Amatsukami considered. Accordingly, everyone that Nurarihyon meets automatically assumes him to be the wisest, most knowledgeable and most deserving leader in the room, a person worthy of veneration and respect, even when he has no idea what the hell he's doing.

Of course, that wasn't a problem when times were good, and Nurarihyon's leadership duties consisted of arbitrating minor territorial disputes between rival yokai, all of whom invariably accepted his "sage advice." Now, Nurarihyon is a reluctant general caught in a war zone and completely in over his head. His initial attempts to divert the obakemono through diplomacy backfired disastrously, with the result that he is now a prisoner in his own palace. Almost all of his followers now either expect him to come up with some brilliant strategy for turning the tide or assume he's already playing out that strategy somehow. Unfortunately, he's out of ideas, and is currently pinning his hopes on some helpful Scions showing up to do his job for him.

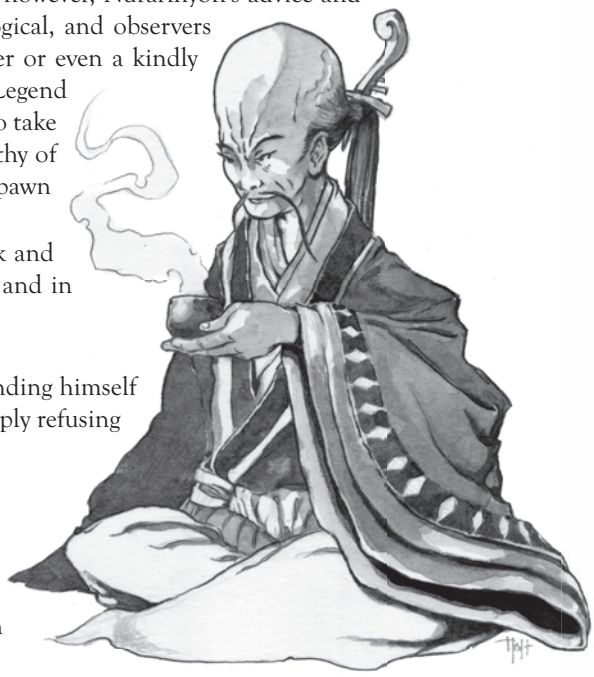
Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 5, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Virtues: Duty 4, Endurance 2, Intellect 3, Valor 1

Abilities: Academics 4, Animal Ken 1, Art (Tea Ceremony) 5, Athletics 1, Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Command 5, Craft (Origami) 2, Empathy 2, Fortitude 1, Integrity 1, Investigation 2, Larceny 1, Marksmanship 1, Medicine 3, Melee 1, Occult 3, Politics 5, Presence 5

Supernatural Powers:

Aura of Leadership: Nurarihyon is constantly surrounded by a magical aura that radiates a veneer of respectability and wisdom, thereby causing observers to believe that the yokai is more intelligent, more wise and more capable than he really is. This aura doesn't prevent others from attacking, Nurarihyon, although all attackers do suffer a -2 internal penalty due to intimidation. Outside of combat, however, Nurarihyon's advice and statements of fact always sound perfectly reasonable and logical, and observers will instinctively defer to him as if he were a respected elder or even a kindly grandfather figure. Mechanically, Nurarihyon can add his Legend in automatic successes to any attempt to persuade someone to take some non-dangerous course of action or to view him as worthy of respect and admiration. Unfortunately for Nurarihyon, titanspawn are completely immune to this effect.



Epic Attributes: Epic Manipulation 5 (all Knacks in this book and in **Scion: Hero**), Epic Charisma 5 (all Knacks in this book and in **Scion: Hero**)

Join Battle: 4

Attacks: None. Nurarihyon is intrinsically incapable of defending himself through physical means, as he cannot conceive of people simply refusing to do what he tells them to.

Soak: 2L/4B

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 6 **Willpower:** 7

Legend: 6 **Legend Points:** 36

Other Notes: Were he convinced to become one for a Scion of the Amatsukami, Nurarihyon would be a four-dot guide.

PAN

The great God Pan was born a child of Hermes. A God since birth, Pan was unusual among the Gods of ancient Greece because of his appearance. The Gods of the Dodekatheon were all perfectly human in appearance, but Pan was born with the horns and hindquarters of a goat, and all of the fauns and satyrs in the World are descended from him. Pan was never permitted to dwell with his father and grandparents on Mount Olympus, in part because of his unnatural appearance and in part because of his disposition. Almost from birth, Pan was given to a manic embrace of chaos and sexual freedom to an extent that disturbed even the endlessly fecund Dodekatheon. While the Horned Man never openly objected to being ostracized by the Greek Gods, the sting of it festered deep in the recesses of his mind.

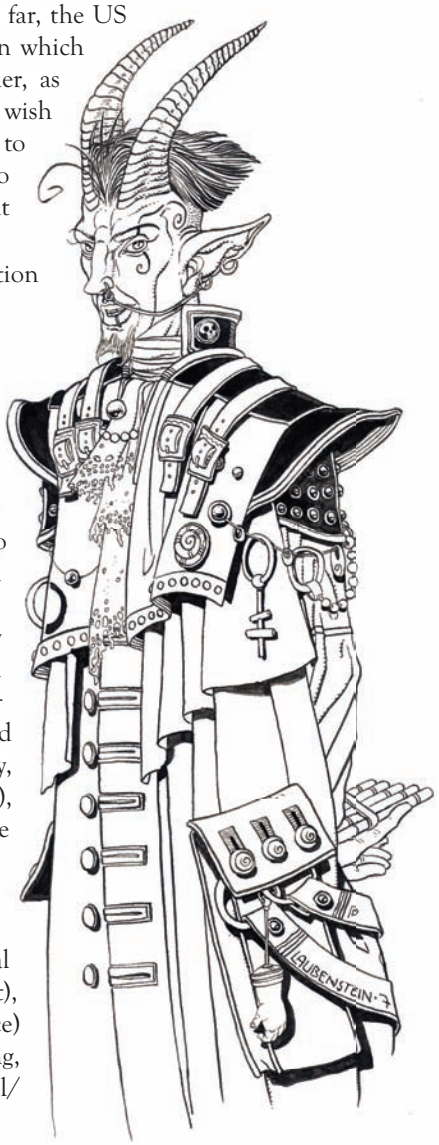
The final straw came when Pan and Apollo quarreled over whose musical invention was superior: Pan's syrinx or Apollo's lute. While the majority of the judges found the lute to be a superior musical instrument, one judge, King Midas, dissented and proclaimed the superiority of the syrinx. Incensed, the petulant Apollo cursed Midas, transforming his ears into those of an ass. Then he skinned Pan alive and used what he removed to fashion the first drum to accompany his lute.

Of course, Pan was a God in his own right, although inferior by dint of heritage and power to Apollo. Having his skin forcefully removed was little more than a painful inconvenience. The trouble came when he complained to his father and to Zeus about his mistreatment. The response was cruel—laughter from Zeus and the other Gods about Apollo's "jest" and an embarrassed silence from Hermes. Pan left Mt. Olympus that day, never to return, and he swore then that he'd see the court of Zeus brought low and removed from power, whatever the cost.

And so it was that when the Dodekatheon and the other pantheons withdrew from mortal affairs, Pan remained behind. Pan obeyed Zeus's edict that no God should seek worshipers among the mortals... to a point. Instead, Pan was worshiped even after the Gods' self-imposed exile, but under a different name: Satan. Throughout the Middle Ages and even to the present day, would-be demon worshippers offered prayers and sacrifices to Pan, believing him to be the Devil described in Christian theology. In fact, those worshippers were actually offering their sacrifices to beings much older than the Satan-figure of Christian stories; they were offering their souls to the Titans through their newest acolyte. Pan's numerous offspring followed him into darkness, and today, satyrs are a potent and dangerous minion race loyal to the Titans (see pp. 280-281).

As for Pan himself, he stalks both the World and the Overworld. Where once he was a God of love and fertility, now he is a demon of lust, rape and sexual depravity. He serves the Titans willingly, convinced that after they have destroyed the Gods, they will build a new World to replace this one—a World in which the very concept of love will be redefined according to Pan's most sadistic fantasies. Worst of all, Pan's vision for the World to come is so cruel, so twisted, that the vindictive Titans might actually give him the role he seeks.

Among Pan's greatest claims to fame is his ability to sow madness among mortals. In fact, the word "panic" is derived from his name. Before his fall from grace, he used this power to sow terror among the Persians at the Battle of Marathon in order to aid the Athenians. And just a few weeks ago, he unleashed his deadly contagious panic in the small town of Piedmont, Arizona (population 114). Thus far, the US government has hushed up the details of the "Piedmont Incident," in which most of the town's inhabitants either killed themselves or each other, as government officials have no idea what caused the incident and don't wish to frighten the population until they have answers. The only survivor to the Piedmont Incident, an elderly Catholic priest, remains confined to a mental institution in Tempe, where he babbles endlessly about a "goat man."



Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 8, Stamina 7; Charisma 8, Manipulation 8, Appearance 1; Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

Virtues: Ambition 3, Malice 4, Rapacity 4, Zealotry 3

Abilities: Animal Ken 7, Art (Music) 5, Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Command 4, Empathy 5, Fortitude 5, Integrity 3, Investigation 1, Larceny 4, Marksmanship 2, Melee 4, Occult 5, Politics 4, Presence 6, Stealth 2, Survival 3, Thrown 4

Supernatural Powers:

Bacchanalia: Pan can fill those around them with overpowering urges to party uncontrollably. Pan's satyr offspring have a similar power, which must be channeled through a syrinx, but Pan can trigger this effect with mere concentration. As the bacchanalia increases in intensity, so do any affected revelers descend further into depravity. Roll Pan's (Charisma + Art + Legend) versus the roll of the victims' (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). Any character whose roll gained fewer successes than Pan's did is affected and, depending on the situation, will begin drinking heavily, partaking in drugs or simply having wild sex (even in a public place), losing all social inhibitions. Pan's Bacchanalia power can affect everyone within a range of (Legend x 100) yards, even if he cannot see the target. He can also focus this power on specific groups or even a single person. Activating this power costs one Legend.

Boons: Animal Aspect (Goat), Animal Command (Goat), Animal Communication (Goat), Animal Feature (Goat), Animal Form (Goat), Arete (Animal Ken) 7, Arete (Art) 2, Arete (Occult) 5, Arete (Presence) 4, Assess Health, Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty, Control Aging, Cradlesong, Crawling Chaos, Create Animal, Eye of the Storm, Heal/

Infect, Holy Font/Epidemic, Hornet's Nest, Instant Riot, Magic 7, Paralyzing Confusion, Recurring Distraction, Restore/Wither, Ride Animal (Goat), Sabot

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 4, Epic Dexterity 4, Epic Stamina 4, Epic Charisma 7, Epic Manipulation 7, Epic Appearance 6, Epic Wits 4. Pan has access to every Knack in both this book and **Scion: Hero** for which he has the appropriate Epic Attributes**.**

Imbue Panic: Pan gave his name to the word "panic," a synonym for mindless fear. That connection is reflected in this power. By spending one Legend point, Pan can invoke mindless, contagious terror in everyone around him... and everyone they subsequently encounter. Roll (Manipulation + Empathy + Legend) to activate this power, which is resisted by the rolled (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) of *everyone* within 10 yards of Pan. Those affected are overcome with hallucinations of their greatest fears, coupled with intense paranoia, anxiety and psychotic tendencies. The effects of the panic last for 24 hours once initiated. During that time, anyone who interacts face-to-face with a person affected by this power must also roll (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) against Pan's initial successes in order to avoid suffering the same effects. Regardless of how late in the day the subsequent victims are exposed to the panic, the effect on all victims end 24 hours after Pan infects his first victims. Scions and other beings with a Legend rating can resist the effects of panic for a scene by spending a temporary Willpower point, but mortals have no resistance. Pan can also set limitations on how the panic spreads, for example by declaring that titanspawn are unaffected or even members of a particular class of mortals (only one side of a military conflict, for example). This power can be activated only once per day.

Spells: Possesses all the spells listed in this book or in **Scion: Hero.**

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 13, Damage 6L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Head Butt: Accuracy 13, Damage 11L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 12, Damage 9L, Parry DV 13, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 14, Damage 6L, Parry DV 14, Speed 4

Xiphos: Accuracy 13, Damage 9L, Parry DV 14, Speed 4

Soak: 4A/11L/14B

Health Levels: -0x13/Incap

Dodge DV: 17 **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 8 **Legend Points:** 64

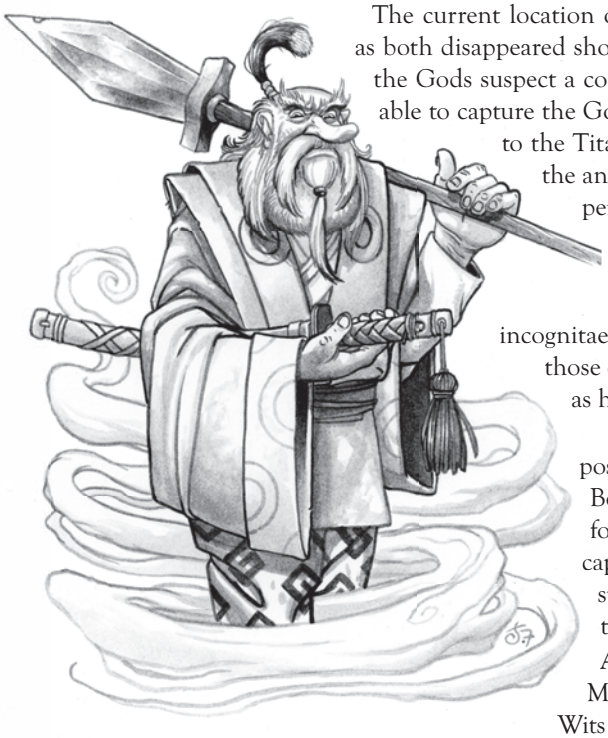
Other Notes: Pan is well aware of how... distinctive his appearance is. Therefore, he uses Animal Features (Goat) specifically to temporarily rid himself of his animal characteristics when necessary.

SARUTAHIKO OKAMI (GUIDE •••••)

The unquestioned ruler of Japan's earthly kami, Sarutahiko Okami is the God of crossroads and guardian of the Bridge of Heaven. The most famous tale of Sarutahiko explains how he essentially traded rulership over the World for a well-endowed bride. As Ninigi no Mikoto, the grandson of Amaterasu who had been chosen to rule over Japan, prepared to descend to his new kingdom, he discovered that Sarutahiko barred his way. As the God of crossroads, Sarutahiko held the power to bar the passage of even Amaterasu herself, and Ninigi stood no chance of achieving his destiny without winning the kunitsukami's loyalty. Rather than send in his mightiest warriors against Sarutahiko, Ninigi decided to try diplomacy, sending Ama no Uzume, the Goddess of mirth and dancing to plead his case.

Undaunted by traditional Japanese mores, Ama no Uzume pulled down the upper part of her kimono from her chest, revealing her ample bosom before approaching Sarutahiko. Apparently, the sight of the Goddess's... assets was sufficient to win Sarutahiko's loyalty to Ninigi's cause, as the God of crossroads proposed to her on the spot, and she consented in exchange for his fealty to the Amatsukami.

In the modern era, Sarutahiko has quietly assumed power for himself, perhaps more so than a kunitsukami should be entitled in Amaterasu's restrictive court. Interpreting the definition of "crossroads" rather broadly, Sarutahiko has claimed dominion over all forms of mass transit in Japan, from Tokyo's infamous subway system to its World-renowned bullet train. Through mortal proxies, he has controlled Japan Airlines since its founding in 1951, and under his guidance, that airline has become the largest in Asia and among the most important in the World.



The current location of Sarutahiko and his wife is a mystery to the Amatsukami, as both disappeared shortly before the Titans broke free from their prison. Some of the Gods suspect a connection between the two events. Were agents of the Titans able to capture the God of crossroads and somehow compel him to open the door to the Titans' prison? Perhaps by holding his wife hostage? Worse, has the ancient and powerful God abandoned his loyalty to Amaterasu, perhaps in exchange for restoration to his former status as a ruler of the World? Japanese Scions search constantly for answers to these questions, as the Overworld War will eventually move from the heavens into the World itself via the terrae incognitae. The God of crossroads might well aid Scions in reaching those exalted places, or if turned to evil, he might bar the way, even as he did to Ninigi all those ages ago.

In his true form, Sarutahiko stands more than 20 feet tall and possesses a terrifying visage that can intimidate even other Gods. Before his disappearance, he tended to take more mundane forms—a chairman of the board, a government inspector, a captain of industry. In all his forms, Sarutahiko is handsome but still intensely intimidating. He is one of the few Gods known to use both positive and negative Epic Appearance Knacks.

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 5, Stamina 7; Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 6; Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 4

Virtues: Duty 4, Endurance 5, Intellect 3, Valor 5

Abilities: Academics 2, Animal Ken 1, Art (Calligraphy) 1, Athletics 5, Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Command 5, Control (Automobile) 3, Craft (Origami) 2, Empathy 3, Fortitude 5, Integrity 5, Investigation 2, Marksmanship 3, Melee 5, Occult 4, Politics 5, Presence 5, Thrown 4

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: The Abducted Spirit, Aegis, The Blinded Spirit, Confer Knack, Come Along, Come Running, The Helpful Spirit, The Impressed Spirit, Rainbow Bridge, The Summoned Spirit, Terra Incognita, Unbarred Entry, Unerring Orientation, Unseen Shield, Vigil Brand, The Wakeful Spirit, Ward, The Watchful Spirit, Where Are You?

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 7 (All appropriate Knacks in both this book and **Scion: Hero**), Epic Dexterity 5 (All appropriate Knacks in both this book and **Scion: Hero**), Epic Stamina 7 (All appropriate Knacks in both this book and **Scion: Hero**), Epic Charisma 3 (Inspirational Figure, Preach On, Unimpeachable Reference), Epic Manipulation 3 (Instant Hypnosis, Overt Order, Rumor Mill), Epic Appearance 4 (Blinding Visage, Center of Attention, Dreadful Mien, Perfect Actor, Serpent's Gaze), Epic Perception 2 (Telescopic Senses, Unfailing Recognition), Epic Intelligence 5 (Know-It-All, Language Mastery, Math Genius, Multitasking, Wireless Interface), Epic Wits 4 (Cobra Reflexes, Monkey in the Middle, Opening Gambit, Rabbit Reflexes)

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 8L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Naginata: Accuracy 14, Damage 14L, Parry DV 18, Speed 4

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 11L, Parry DV 15, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 8L, Parry DV 17, Speed 4

Soak: 7A/26L/29B

Health Levels: -0x28/Incap

Dodge DV: 20 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 8 **Legend Points:** 64

Other Notes: Sarutahiko's relic jeweled naginata has the following traits: Speed 4, Accuracy +4, Damage +6L, Defense +3. If he was found (and not in cahoots with the Titans), Sarutahiko could become a five-dot guide for a Scion of the Amatsukami.

VALKYRIE
(GUIDE ••••)

In Norse legend, the valkyries served both as the agents of Odin and also as manifestations of the Norns. In their latter capacity, the valkyries flew above great battles astride enormous wolves, deciding which of the combatants would live and which would die. Although they were guided by Fate in making their choices, the valkyries also provided aid to the All-Father, ensuring that the greatest warriors would find their way to Valhalla to join the einherjar (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 286).

In the modern era, valkyries still haunt the great battlefields of the World—the Somme, Iwo Jima, the Mekong Delta, Basra—although as modern warfare has become more "efficient," it has been harder and harder to find soldiers who exemplify the Viking concept of heroism. Therefore, to meet the oncoming storm of the titanspawn, the valkyries have broadened their horizons a bit, interpreting their mandate to allow the taking of those who died heroically, even if not in battle. Today's einherjar include mercenaries, cops, even fire fighters, most of whom are astonished to find themselves drafted post mortem into the great army of Asgard.

While the valkyries are considered to be agents of Fate, if not aspects of it, they are not incarnations of Fate in the same way as the Norns and the Moirae. Instead, the valkyries seem to represent the ability of heroes to resist Fate, to struggle against the inevitability of destiny. When the final battle comes, the valkyries will not aid Odin and his forces, but until that day comes, they will do everything in their power to make sure that his armies contain only the best and boldest that the human race has to offer.

When not acting in their capacity as choosers of the slain, each valkyrie resides in the World, concealed as a mortal woman. The tragedy of Brynhildr and Sigurd has taught them all the dangers of consorting too closely with Gods and their Scions, and each of the valkyries today lives hidden among mortals to avoid becoming Fatebound. While tradition states that there were only nine valkyries, there are actually several dozen of them in existence. Some of the most powerful are listed here.

Brynhildr resides in London under the name Bronwyn Kincaid. Easily the most legendary of the valkyries, Brynhildr survived her tumultuous relationship with the Scion Sigurd (instead of committing suicide as the *Eddas* claimed). She withdrew from the affairs of Gods and mortals alike for centuries thereafter until the escape of the Titans forced Odin to seek her out and plead with her to resume her role as first among choosers of the slain. She agreed to come out of retirement, but with misgivings. Through her connection with the Norns, she knows that a Scion of the Aesir is fated to find the legendary Ring of Andvari once possessed by Sigurd, and she also knows that she is fated to love this unknown Scion despite herself.

Hildr wears the form of Major Andrea Hill, a US Marine stationed in Iraq. She has seen too many of her fellow soldiers die in battle, and while she has dutifully sent their souls to Valhalla, she is in danger of drawing censure from Odin and the Norns for her biases. Specifically, Hildr has "gone native" and considers herself a patriotic American soldier. As such, she refuses to send Iraqis who die in battle against the Americans to Valhalla, no matter how much personal heroism their deaths might reflect. This bias has deprived the einherjar of some highly capable warriors, and the matter has not gone unnoticed.

Sigrdrifa lives in Los Angeles, California, and goes under the identity of *Los Angeles Times* crime reporter Angela Rifa. As Angela, Sigrdrifa focuses her attention on heroes within the LAPD, the LAFD and various governmental law-enforcement agencies. She also draws potential einherjar from the various LA gangs. Sigrdrifa is considered to be the second most respected valkyrie after Brynhildr, and the two

tend to keep their distance. Sigrdrifa was the guide of the hero Sigurd, Brynhildr's lost love, and while there is no overt bad blood between the two, encounters between them are usually unbearably tense for everyone else present.

Sigrun lives in Buenos Aires, Argentina, under the alias Selinda Runez. Sigrun is perhaps the least active of the major valkyries. Long ago, she watched her husband, Helgi Hundingsbane, die at the hands of her only living relative, and while her late husband's soul was conveyed to Valhalla to live in luxury, Sigrun was compelled to remain on Midgard and continue with her duties. Embittered, Sigrun usually takes the form of an old widow who lives in seclusion. She takes her einherjar, when she feels compelled to do so, from would-be revolutionaries across the South American continent.

Pruor resides in Johannesburg, South Africa, under the name Prudence Redgrave. Her husband, Edgar Redgrave, is the owner and CEO of Redgrave S.A., Africa's largest and most profitable private law-enforcement (i.e., mercenary) company. Since her marriage, Pruor has quietly manipulated her husband's business affairs to suit her agenda. To Pruor's mind, her fellow valkyries have become dangerously lax in who they have chosen for membership in the einherjar. Therefore, instead of simply hoping to find a suitable candidate who obligingly dies heroically, Pruor is taking a more direct route, recruiting men she finds suitable for service in Asgard for her husband's company and then assigning them to the most dangerous trouble-spots in the World. In addition to her sophisticated approach to finding new einherjar, Pruor also has another distinction—she is a Scion of Thor. This combination makes her the most physically powerful valkyrie except for Brynhildr, of whom Pruor is quite jealous.

These traits are those of Hildr, who stands in roughly the middle of the valkyrie power scale. Some valkyrie, such as Brynhildr and Pruor, are much more powerful, while others, like Sigrun, are somewhat weaker.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5; Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4; Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

Virtues: Courage 4, Endurance 3, Expression 2, Loyalty 3

Abilities: Animal Ken 5, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Command 5, Control 4, Empathy 2, Fortitude 5, Integrity 5, Investigation 2, Larceny 1, Marksmanship 4, Medicine 2, Melee 5, Occult 4, Politics 4, Presence 5, Science 1, Stealth 3, Survival 2, Thrown 3

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Animal Aspect (Raven), Animal Command (Raven), Animal Communication (Raven), Come Along, Death Senses, Euthanasia, Ride Animal (Raven), Summon Ghost, Unbarred Entry, Unerring Orientation, Where Are You?

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 4 (Crushing Grip, Divine Rampage, Divine Wrath, Holy Rampage, Hurl to the Horizon), Epic Dexterity 3 (Cat's Grace, Lightning Sprinter, Trick Shooter, Untouchable Opponent), Epic Stamina 3 (Damage Conversion, Holy Fortitude, Self-Healing), Epic Charisma 2 (Inspirational Figure, Never Say Die), Epic Wits 3 (Eternal Vigilance, Opening Gambit, Rabbit Reflexes)

Touch of the Valkyrie: When a valkyrie encounters a dying mortal (or even one who has died within the past five minutes) whose fatal injuries were the result of an act of great heroism, fortitude or loyalty for one's allies, she can send the dead hero's soul to Valhalla to join the einherjar. Doing so costs the valkyrie one Legend, and the Storyteller assigns the new einherjar five dots of Norse Virtue points appropriate for his dying act. Alternately, if a valkyrie finds a living mortal who she believes is worthy to join the einherjar, she can spend a point of Legend to mark him for induction. Thereafter, when that mortal dies, his soul will automatically ascend to Valhalla *provided* that he dies in battle, even if the valkyrie is not present at the time.

Join Battle: 8

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 6L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 9L, Parry DV 8, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 6L, Parry DV 10, Speed 4

Valkyrie Spear: Accuracy 14, Damage 10L, Parry DV 11, Speed 3

Desert Eagle: Accuracy 9, Damage 6L, Range 50, Clip 7, Speed 5, P

M16: Accuracy 9, Damage 6L, Range 150, Clip 30, Speed 5, P

Soak: 3A/7L/9B

Health Levels: -0x10/Incap

Dodge DV: 11 **Willpower:** 7

Legend: 5 **Legend Points:** 25

Other Notes: The valkyrie spear is a powerful weapon resembling a simple hasta. Its powerful capabilities belie its simple appearance, however: Speed 3, Accuracy +4, Damage +4L, Defense +4. Only females can wield a valkyrie spear effectively; in the hands of a male, it has the traits of a normal hasta. If taken as such by a Scion of the Aesir, a valkyrie would be a four-dot guide.

OTHERS

The beings described here are not "lesser immortals" as the Gods define the term—none of them exists as a weak God assigned to govern some minor principle of the World. Instead, each is a unique creature, immortal and powerful, but not really a God. Some are beasts of legend, while others are remarkable individuals blessed—or cursed—with immortality.

AMMIT, THE GUARDIAN OF DUAT

In the legends of the ancient Egyptians, Ammit was neither a Goddess nor a beast so much as a force of divine fury. Ammit once dwelt in Duat, the Egyptian underworld, near the great scales of justice that Anubis used to judge the souls of mortals. When Anubis judged a mortal to be unworthy of entering Aaru, the domain of Osiris, he gave the mortal's heart to Ammit who promptly devoured it, thereby condemning the hapless mortal to an eternity of restlessness and misery.

Of course, that was back when there was a stable Underworld in which Ammit could reside. After the Titans fled their prison, Duat, like the rest of the Underworld, was thrown into chaos, and Ammit somehow found herself in the World, a strange place with which she had no experience. Anubis was nowhere to be seen, and worst of all, no one was around to give her hearts to eat. So Ammit improvised.

In her true form, Ammit might well be mistaken for a chimera, with the head of a crocodile, the front quarters of a lion and the hindquarters of a hippopotamus. A creature of incredible strength and ferocity, Ammit is somewhat intelligent but utterly ignorant of mortal customs, to say nothing of social nuance and moral relativism. That said, she is a fairly cunning hunter, and she has learned to conceal her true form behind that of a beautiful Egyptian woman. When wearing her human form, Ammit wanders the World aimlessly until her acute senses detect the familiar scent of a corrupt mortal, one whose heart would be found unworthy by Anubis. Of course, Anubis only judged the Egyptian dead, and as a practical matter, Ammit perceives as "unworthy" any mortal whose moral conduct violates Egyptian Virtues (which is to say, most modern mortals). When Ammit scents a particularly vile mortal, by her somewhat inconsistent standards, she stalks him and eventually attacks, ripping out his heart and devouring it.

Despite this rather unwholesome conduct, Ammit is not an evil creature, but simply ignorant and horribly misguided. Any Scion who identifies her true nature and leads her back to Duat (perhaps by way of some terra incognita associated with the Pesedjet) will earn the gratitude of Anubis himself. On the other hand, a Scion who slays Ammit will have earned Anubis's eternal enmity, and perhaps that of the entire Pesedjet, as Ammit played an essential role in the functioning of the Egyptian underworld.

Attributes: Strength 10, Dexterity 5, Stamina 10; Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 5; Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 4

Virtues: Conviction 3, Harmony 3, Order 2, Piety 2

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Fortitude 5, Integrity 4, Presence 2, Stealth 2, Survival 2

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 5 (All appropriate Knacks), Epic Dexterity 5 (All appropriate Knacks), Epic Stamina 5 (All appropriate Knacks), Epic Appearance 3 (Dreadful Mien, Lasting Impression, Serpent's Gaze), Epic Perception 4 (Environmental Awareness, Predatory Focus, Subliminal Warning, Supernal Hunter)

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Bite: Accuracy 9, Damage 16L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Claw: Accuracy 10, Damage 13L, Parry DV —, Speed 4

Soak: 5A/16L/21B

Health Levels: -0x27/Incap

Dodge DV: 19 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 6 **Legend Points:** 36

Other Notes: None

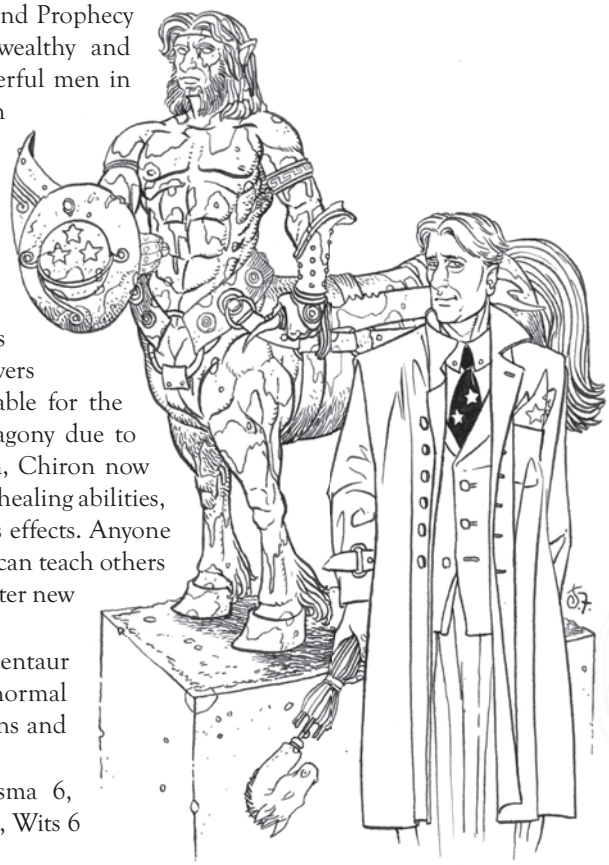
CHIRON, THE ERUDITE CENTAUR (GUIDE •••••)

The legendary Chiron was the model for Ixion's titanspawn centaur minion race. Though technically titanspawn himself (the offspring of Cronus and the nymph Philyra), Chiron was gifted from birth with both intelligence and compassion. During the earliest stages of the Titan War, Chiron swore his loyalty to the Gods of Olympus, reasoning that the World they would build would be more stable and orderly than the endless chaos of the Titans. Chiron, who was as wise in the ways of the Titans as any of the Dodekatheon, advised the Gods in their strategies for containing the unruly Titans. Later, he tutored many of the most famous Greek Scions in the use of their divine powers: Asclepius, Ajax, Theseus, Achilles, Jason and Heracles all studied under Chiron early in their careers.

Legend states that Chiron was accidentally poisoned by Heracles with an arrow dipped in the blood of the hydra. Chiron was immortal and could not die from the wound, but he suffered in agony. To atone, Heracles negotiated a deal whereby Chiron could sacrifice his immortality and ascend to the heavens as the constellation Sagittarius. In exchange, Zeus would agree to free the Titan Prometheus from his eternal imprisonment for giving fire to humankind.

Of course, accounts of Prometheus's generosity and concern for human well-being are greatly exaggerated, the result of centuries of propaganda by Titan-worshiping cults. In truth, however, Chiron *was* wounded accidentally by Heracles, and the centaur was unable to heal himself or even mitigate his pain. In order to end his own suffering, Chiron used his magical powers to turn himself to stone, and then to project his own consciousness into a mortal vessel. While Chiron was immortal, however, his mortal vessels were not, and it was periodically necessary for Chiron to return to his stone body and use it as a conduit to transfer his mind into a new host. One of Chiron's most famous hosts was the sculptor Phidias, who oversaw the construction of the Parthenon, and Chiron's statue was incorporated into the design of the outer friezes. Centuries later, the Parthenon was visited by the British diplomat Lord Elgin, and after possessing Elgin, Chiron oversaw the removal of his statue from the increasingly decaying Parthenon and its conveyance to Great Britain. Chiron's original form currently resides in the British Museum in a special wing devoted to the so-called Elgin Marbles.

Over the centuries, Chiron has lived hundreds of lives. Whenever his current mortal host dies, his intellect returns to his stony true form. From there, he simply waits until a suitable vessel comes to view the Elgin Marbles, which, like the Parthenon, attract thousands of visitors each year. Chiron's powerful knowledge of Fate and his high levels of Magic and Prophecy allow him to instantly know when a suitable (read: wealthy and influential) vessel is within range. Some of the most powerful men in the British Empire over the last 200 years have secretly been possessed by the immortal centaur.



Chiron's stone form remains immortal, which translates into a powerful Fate-based protection. Attempts to damage the statue are automatically prevented by random events unless the attacker has a higher Legend rating that Chiron. While petrified, however, Chiron can take no actions in the World other than to transfer his mind into a host, and once he enters a new host, his powers are severely limited. While this situation has been tolerable for the last 3,000-plus years (at least more so than writhing in agony due to his poisoned injuries), it is certainly sub-optimal. As such, Chiron now spends much of his time searching for Scions with powerful healing abilities, hoping that one might be able to cure him of the poison's effects. Anyone who could do so would gain a powerful mentor, as Chiron can teach others not only how to quickly learn new Abilities, but how to master new powers as well.

These traits describe Chiron if he is restored to his centaur form and cured of his injuries. Otherwise, treat him as a normal mortal who has an encyclopedic knowledge of Gods, Titans and the occult.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 6, Stamina 6; Charisma 6, Manipulation 5, Appearance 4; Perception 4, Intelligence 6, Wits 6
Virtues: Expression 4, Intellect 5, Valor 2, Vengeance 2

Abilities: Academics 5, Animal Ken 5, Art (Many) 5, Athletics 6, Awareness 5, Brawl 4, Command 3, Control (Automobile) 2, Craft (Many) 5, Empathy 4, Fortitude 4, Integrity 5, Investigation 4, Larceny 5, Marksmanship 6, Medicine 6, Melee 4, Occult 6, Politics 6, Presence 5, Science (Many) 6, Stealth 2, Survival 4, Thrown 3

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Dexterity 1 (Lightning Sprinter), Epic Stamina 2, (Damage Conversion, Self-Healing), Epic Intelligence 5 (All Knacks in this book and **Scion: Hero)**

Invulnerability: Chiron's centaur form can be slain only by someone with a Legend rating equal to or higher than his own. He ignores totally all damage inflicted by those with lesser Legend ratings.

Seize the Mortal Vessel: Exactly how Chiron can accomplish this feat is something he keeps close to his chest, but this power allows Chiron to project his mind into that of a mortal being without a Legend rating. Once he does so, the mind of the mortal is obliterated, and Chiron remains in control of the body, though he does have all of the mortal's memories. What's more, Chiron retains these memories after the death of the mortal form, at which point his mind returns to his stone body. In this way, Chiron has remained up to date on modern culture, science and technology.

Join Battle: 11

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 7B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 10B, Parry DV 5, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 7B, Parry DV 7, Speed 4

Xiphos: Accuracy 12, Damage 10L, Parry DV 7, Speed 4

Chiron's Bow: Accuracy 14, Damage 11L, Range 60, Speed 6, P

Soak: 2A/5L/8B

Health Levels: -0x9/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 10 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 6 **Legend Points:** 36

Other Notes: Chiron's bow has superior range and traits only when fired by someone as large as himself. In the hands of a normal-sized person, it is simply equivalent to a daikyu. Similarly, Chiron's xiphos has +2 Accuracy in his hands simply because it is proportionately a small weapon for him.

ICARUS

The tale of Icarus is well-known. The impetuous child of the inventor Daedalus, Icarus died when he and his father fled captivity in Crete with the miraculous flying wings Daedalus had invented. According to legend, Icarus flew too close to the sun, which melted the wax that held his wings together, then he plunged into the sea. As the saying goes, however, reports of Icarus's death were greatly exaggerated. For what most legends forgot was that Icarus had an older half-brother, a Cretan physician named Iapyx. Iapyx observed Daedalus and Icarus's desperate flight from the Labyrinth of Minos and watched in horror as Icarus plunged down into the Mediterranean. Iapyx was able to find the mortally wounded young boy, still clutching the ruined remains of his own Daedalus Device.

But Icarus did not die. Iapyx provided the ruined boy with polyidus, a rare herb native to Crete at the time, which was capable of sustaining and extending life. Although Icarus was half-drowned and horribly burned, the polyidus kept him (and later Iapyx) from dying. Instead, Icarus would spend the next several millennia trapped in a state of perpetual arrested adolescence, unable to heal, unable to mature, ever a spoiled and petulant boy angry with the World because he had broken his favorite toy. Ever since his fateful fall, Icarus and his brother have dwelled within the Labyrinth, a non-Euclidean maze whose various exits are actually portals to various places both within the World and without. They share this space with the surviving minotaurs, descendants of the legendary Cretan Bull and its innumerable victims. More than anything else, Icarus wants to leave the Labyrinth and take to the skies once more. He only needs another

Daedalus Device or some other comparable Birthright artifact. Vindictive to the point of sociopathy, Icarus doesn't particularly care where such an artifact might come from or what its current owner might say about its theft.

The tale of Icarus and his efforts to steal the Daedalus Device belonging to Donnie Rhodes is on pages 1–32. The traits of Icarus and Iapyx are identical to those of any common mortal (see **Scion: Hero**, pp. 280–281) save for their effective immortality (equal to that of all demigod Scions), which lasts only as long as the two take regular doses of the polyidus herb. Despite still technically being a mortal, Icarus's suffering and experiences have instilled in him the equivalent of three dots in the Vengeance Virtue.

MINOTAUR
(FOLLOWERS •••••)

Cruel, barbaric and consumed by lust and gluttony, the minotaurs are a breed as dangerous as most any lesser kind of titanspawn. They are not titanspawn, however, but rather the result of what happens when the capricious Gods of the Dodekatheon "gift" mortals with signs of divine favor without bothering to consider the ramifications. Millennia ago, great Poseidon desired to demonstrate his support of King Minos of Crete, a mighty seafaring nation that venerated Poseidon above the other Gods. And so, he fashioned a great white magical bull, a symbol of his own godly power, and caused it to rise forth from the sea and stride out toward the site of a great feast being held in honor of Minos and his wife Pasiphaë on the shore. The people of Crete rejoiced at the sight of the magnificent bull and hailed its arrival as a sign that Poseidon favored the nation.

And then, the Cretan Bull promptly raped Pasiphaë.

To say that Minos and his people were aghast at this development would be a gross understatement. However, as much as the Cretans worshiped Poseidon, they feared him even more, and so, the people took no effort to restrain the monster, nor even to corral him. Instead, they simply allowed the bull to have the run of the island for fear of offending its creator, all the while keeping the Cretan women locked away from the lust-crazed monstrosity's depraved desires as much as possible. Eventually, Heracles captured the Cretan Bull as his Seventh Labor, and rather than bring the creature back to Crete, he simply released it near Marathon, where it was later captured by Theseus, who sacrificed it to Zeus.

Unfortunately, as horrific as the Cretan Bull's systematic rape of Pasiphaë and others had been, the Cretan people were even more appalled to learn that such couplings invariably produced issue. Each mating produced a single child—half-man, half-bull—and often killed the mother during the difficult birthing process. The people were revolted by these minotaurs (the name, "bulls of Minos," was a calculated insult to the king who had brought such nightmares to Crete), especially as the creatures quickly grew to adulthood and were just as lascivious as their sire. Yet Minos and his advisor, the Scion Daedalus, still feared offending Poseidon by slaying the offspring of his "generous gift." Instead, they captured all the minotaurs and imprisoned them within the Labyrinth, a non-Euclidean space accessible from Crete that Daedalus had discovered and mapped. There, the minotaurs would remain trapped for all time. Although not intrinsically immortal, the minotaurs within the Labyrinth have access to the herb polyidus, which extends their lives unnaturally. Creatures of wretched carnality, the minotaurs desire the flesh of women both to mate with and to devour, although they will settle for the flesh of men for either purpose.

The surviving minotaurs conditionally serve Icarus and his brother Iapyx, although even those two are careful not to push the beasts.

Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 4, Stamina 10; Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1; Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

Virtues: Expression 1, Rapacity 4, Valor 3, Vengeance 3 (Despite their divine origin, all minotaurs replace the Intellect Virtue normally associated with the Dodekatheon with the Dark Virtue Rapacity.)

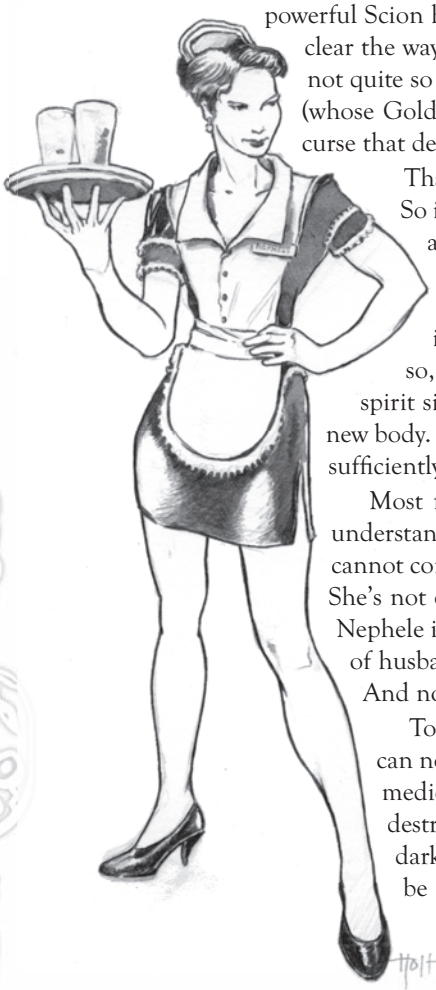
Abilities: Animal Ken 3, Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Brawl 4, Fortitude 4, Integrity 1, Investigation 1, Melee 3, Presence (Intimidation only) 3, Stealth 1, Survival 4, Thrown 2

Supernatural Powers:
Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 2 (Crushing Grip, Holy Rampage), Epic Stamina 2 (Damage Conversion, Self-Healing)
Join Battle: 4
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 8, Damage 9L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P
Club: Accuracy 8, Damage 15B, Parry DV 4, Speed 5
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 7, Damage 12B, Parry DV 3, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 9, Damage 9B, Parry DV 5, Speed 4
Soak: 2A/7L/12B
Health Levels: -0x8/-4/Incap
Dodge DV: 6 **Willpower:** 7
Legend: 4 **Legend Points:** 16
Other Notes: A minotaur might be taken as a follower by a Scion of the Dodekatheon, at a Birthright cost of five dots for a single minotaur.

NEPHELE

Nephele was not born as either a Scion or a God. Instead, she was created out of the very air itself by Zeus as a test for Ixion, a Scion of Ares (see pp. 290-291). While the fallen Scion hid his corruption and madness well, Zeus eventually came to suspect that Ixion had become an agent of the Titans. To test his theory, Zeus created a physical copy of Hera from a cloud and then arranged for the false "Hera" to be captured by titanspawn and placed at Ixion's mercy. This infiltrator, who Zeus later named Nephele, induced Ixion to admit his plans to betray the Gods, and Zeus then captured Ixion and had him imprisoned within Tartarus.

Despite her service to Zeus, Nephele was accorded no place among the Gods. Instead, she was bound to the World and married off to a mortal king named Athamas, to whom she bore two children, the twins Helle and Phrixus. Years later, however, Athamas left Nephele for the maiden Ino in order to curry favor with Ino's father, the powerful Scion hero Cadmus, even going so far as to agree to sacrifice Helle and Phrixus and clear the way for Ino's own children to inherit the kingdom. Incensed, Nephele, who was not quite so powerless as Athamas believed, rescued the twins with the ram Chrysomallos (whose Golden Fleece was later sought by Jason and the Argonauts) and laid a powerful curse that decimated the kingdom Athamas and Ino ruled.



That was millennia ago. Athamas and Ino are long dead. So are Helle and Phrixus. So is virtually everyone who was ever important to Nephele. But she continues on, an artificial being with the features of a Goddess who cannot die because her creator, Zeus, didn't bother to build her with an off-switch. Fashioned from the very air itself by the most powerful of the Sky Gods, Nephele is as close to immortal as perhaps any non-God can get. Oh, she can die, and she has done so, untold thousands of times. But whenever her body ceases to function, her spirit simply migrates to the nearest quantity of fresh air and then converts it into a new body. Quite possibly, the only thing that can permanently kill Nephele (other than a sufficiently powerful Sky God) is the total destruction of the World's atmosphere.

Most frustrating of all, however, is the fact that Zeus and the other Gods don't understand why Nephele hates her immortal existence. Immortal themselves, the Gods cannot conceive of wanting to die out of sheer boredom. But then, Nephele isn't a God. She's not even a Scion with the potential to become a God. For all practical purposes, Nephele is simply a mortal woman who can neither age nor die. She has had thousands of husbands and perhaps millions of children. She has done everything worth doing. And now, she just wants everything to end.

Today, Nephele, who has been the queen of a dozen nations over the centuries, can now be found working as a waitress in Bakersfield, California. She embraces the mediocrity of her current role, daring to hope that the Titans will return and destroy the World. Despite her despair, however, Nephele has not totally fallen to darkness. A determined Scion, especially one with powerful social Knacks, might be able to reach through the haze of depression that grips the immortal woman

and give her purpose again. Failing that, a more cynical Scion might be able to persuade her that he can help her to die. Either approach might win Nephele's loyalty, at least temporarily.

While not a God, Nephele has considerable power over the Fertility, Sky and Magic Purviews. She is also a perfect copy of Hera, and has that Goddess's Epic Appearance, but none of her other powers. Most importantly, Nephele has the power of knowledge. She has walked the World for over 3,000 years and is cursed to remember all of it. Among many other secrets, Nephele knows the means by which Ixion was able to merge humans and animals into composite creatures (most notably the centaurs). She also has complete knowledge of the history, powers and even current location of the Golden Fleece.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3; Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 6; Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Virtues: Expression 2, Intellect 3, Valor 2, Vengeance 2

Abilities: Academics 5, Art (Painting) 3, Athletics 1, Awareness 2, Brawl 1, Empathy 2, Fortitude 3, Integrity 2, Investigation 1, Medicine 3, Melee 2, Occult 5, Politics 5, Presence 5, Stealth 2

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Magic 4, Sky's Grace, Storm Augmentation, Wind's Freedom, Wind Grapple

Epic Attributes: Epic Appearance 5 (all Knacks from this book and **Scion: Hero**)

Invulnerability: If slain, Nephele re-forms unharmed out of the nearest patch of breathable air. It might be possible to permanently slay Nephele, but doing so could have disastrous effects on the World's atmosphere. This was an unintended side effect of her creation, as Zeus certainly didn't intend to give Nephele an even greater level of immortality than he enjoys himself.

Spells: An experienced sorceress, Nephele has four dots in the Magic Purview and knows every spell in this book and **Scion: Hero** for which she meets the prerequisites.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks: None. Nephele's ennui prevents her from even bothering to defend herself against attacks, let alone to strike at others.

Soak: 2L/3B

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 6 **Willpower:** 5

Legend: 6 **Legend Points:** 36

Other Notes: None

SISYPHUS
(GUIDE •••••)

Greek legends attribute a divine lineage to Sisyphus, describing him as the son of Aeolus, a Scion of Zeus elevated to godhood. Those selfsame legends describe Sisyphus as one of the craftiest men ever to live.

Sisyphus rose to become king of Corinth, and he developed a well-deserved reputation for intellect and cunning, as well as a regrettable lack of respect for the Gods of the Dodekatheon. Zeus condemned him to Tartarus for the crime of revealing several of Zeus's sexual peccadilloes and embarrassing him before Hera. When Sisyphus first went to Hades' realm, he tricked Thanatos, the physical embodiment of Death, into trying on the chains that had been designed to contain the mortal. Binding Thanatos with the magical chains, Sisyphus essentially abolished death for a while—while the God was bound, no one in the World could die.

Eventually, Ares, incensed that no one could die heroically in battle, stormed the Underworld to free Thanatos as Sisyphus escaped back to Corinth. There, Sisyphus directed his wife to omit certain funerary rituals in the event of his second death. Due to her omissions, Sisyphus was able to plead with Hades' queen, Persephone, and persuade her to let him return to Corinth to ask his wife to perform the necessary sacrifices. Naturally, once in Corinth, Sisyphus refused to return to the Underworld until Hermes came to match wits with the trickster. Hermes offered Sisyphus a deal: Sisyphus could have immortality and the powers of a God if he

would return to Tartarus and succeed in a single challenge of strength and intellect. In his arrogance, Sisyphus agreed. Once in Tartarus, Sisyphus was chained to a boulder and told that he could have his reward only when he could get the rock to the top of a hill. Sisyphus quickly realized, however, that the task could not be accomplished, as the heavy boulder was unbalanced while the top of the hill came to a sharp point. Thus, it was impossible to balance the rock on top of the hill without it sliding down again, and Sisyphus would spend eternity trapped in Tartarus with an impossible assignment.

Or at least, that was Hermes' plan. Unfortunately for the Gods, when the Titans burst free from Tartarus, flying debris sheered off the top of Sisyphus's hill, leaving a relatively smooth surface. Sisyphus once again strained to push the rock up to the top of the hill and managed to balance it there. He then faded out of the Underworld and back into the World, just seconds before the onrushing Titans obliterated the hill and everything around it. Sisyphus came to on the outskirts of the modern city of Corinth, Greece, alive and filled with power. He has come to learn that the Titans and the Gods are once again locked in battle, and he is uncertain of which side he should join. Intellectually, he realizes that the victorious Titans will destroy the World. On the other hand, 3,000 years was a long time to spend pushing a boulder up a hill. Sisyphus has a lot of pent-up anger with the Gods of the Dodekatheon, even if he technically now is one. Perhaps some heroic young Scions might be able to persuade him to join the right side...

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3; Charisma 4, Manipulation 5, Appearance 3; Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

Virtues: Expression 4, Intellect 5, Valor 2, Vengeance 2

Abilities: Academics 4, Animal Ken 1, Athletics 3, Awareness 4, Brawl 2, Command 3, Control (Horse) 4, Empathy 5, Fortitude 4, Integrity 3, Investigation 5, Larceny 6, Marksmanship 2, Medicine 3, Melee 3, Occult 5, Politics 5, Presence 5, Science 2, Stealth 3, Survival 2, Thrown 3

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Arete (Empathy) 6, Arete (Larceny) 2, Arete (Politics) 1, Arete (Presence) 3

Epic Attributes: Epic Manipulation 5 (All Knacks in **Scion: Hero** and this book), Epic Intelligence 5 (All Knacks in **Scion: Hero** and this book), Epic Wits 5 (All Knacks in **Scion: Hero** and this book)

Invulnerability: Against most enemies, Sisyphus won't even bother to dodge. He cannot be harmed, let alone killed, by anyone with a Legend rating less than his own.

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 6, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 5, Damage 7B, Parry DV 2, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 7, Damage 4B, Parry DV 4, Speed 4

Xiphos: Accuracy 8, Damage 7L, Parry DV 4, Speed 4

Soak: 2L/3B

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 8 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 8 **Legend Points:** 64

Other Notes: Sisyphus hasn't been back for very long and so hasn't had any opportunity to acquire new Boons. He's a quick study, though, and if used as a "recurring villain," Storytellers might wish to let him gain Boons at a frightening rate. In particular, his remarkable Manipulation skills might let him trick young and inexperienced Scions out of their Birthright items with ease.

THE DEAD

For the Scions, the Hero's Journey inevitably leads to the Underworld. While there, they could encounter creatures far more dangerous than simple spectres or mummies. The Dead collectively include unusual spirit beings who might aid Scions, spectres who have sworn loyalty to the Titans' cause, the walking dead, and a few uniquely weird ghosties. As is normal for ghosts and spectres, such creatures cannot affect any person or object within the World unless they have first manifested there. Otherwise, the creatures automatically fail all social and physical actions to affect the living.

GASHADOKURO

The folk tales of Japan speak of the gashadokuro, a deadly skeletal monstrosity that results when a person has died of starvation. In truth, a gashadokuro is not merely a victim of malnutrition or grinding poverty, but of torture. The true gashadokuro is fashioned through profane applications of the Death Purview instigated by servants of Mikaboshi. The future gashadokuro is a mortal captured by Titan cultists, forcibly starved and then force-fed the flesh from his own limbs, which are carefully amputated and preserved. The maddening experience of being forced to cannibalize one's self drives the poor victim mad long before he succumbs to death, and the spectre created by this treatment is then bound to his own skeletal remains. The resulting gashadokuro is cursed with all-consuming hunger for human flesh.

Gashadokuro have all the normal powers of spectres, but rarely use them. Instead, most gashadokuro rely on their innate power to change their size. By spending a single Legend point, the gashadokuro's skeletal form grows by up to 15 times its normal size. This transformation is accompanied by a significant increase in its strength and damage resistance. Amatsukami Scions have occasionally discovered to their horror that what they initially thought was a mere hungry corpse was actually one of Mikaboshi's deadliest weapons of mass destruction.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4; Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 5; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Ambition 1, Malice 3, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl 4, Fortitude 4, Integrity 2, Melee 4, Presence 3, Thrown 4

Supernatural Powers:

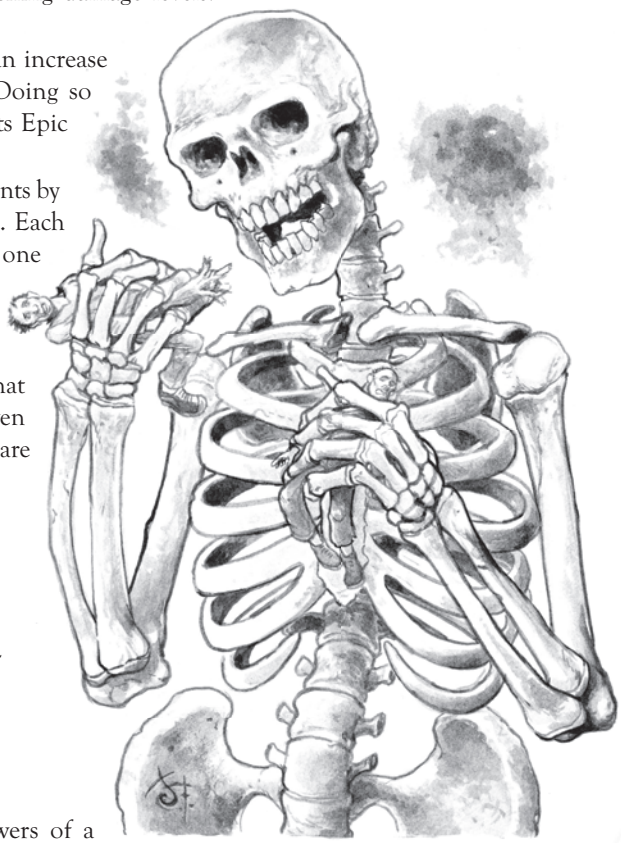
Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 4 (all Knacks in **Scion: Hero**, plus Divine Rampage and Divine Wrath)

Ghostly Regeneration: A gashadokuro can spend up to his permanent Legend in Legend points to heal injuries to himself. Each point spent heals one lethal or two bashing damage levels. Activating this power is a Speed 4, DV -0 action.

Growth: By spending a point of Legend, a gashadokuro can increase its size by a factor of 15 for the duration of a scene. Doing so doubles its normal Strength and Stamina and increases its Epic Strength to 6.

Legend Recovery: A gashadokuro can regain spent Legend points by killing and completely devouring mortals and Scions alike. Each mortal completely devoured causes the creature to regain one Legend. Each Scion devoured allows it to regain Legend points equal to the Scion's Legend rating.

Skeletal Structure: Gashadokuro have relatively weak soak values. Unfortunately for Scions, this is offset by the fact that they have no flesh to damage, just bones. Consequently, even successful hits *halve* all damage inflicted after damage dice are rolled.



Join Battle: 5

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 7, Damage 6L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 6, Damage 9L, Parry DV 3, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 8, Damage 6L, Parry DV 4, Speed 4

Soak: 2L/4B

Health Levels: -0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

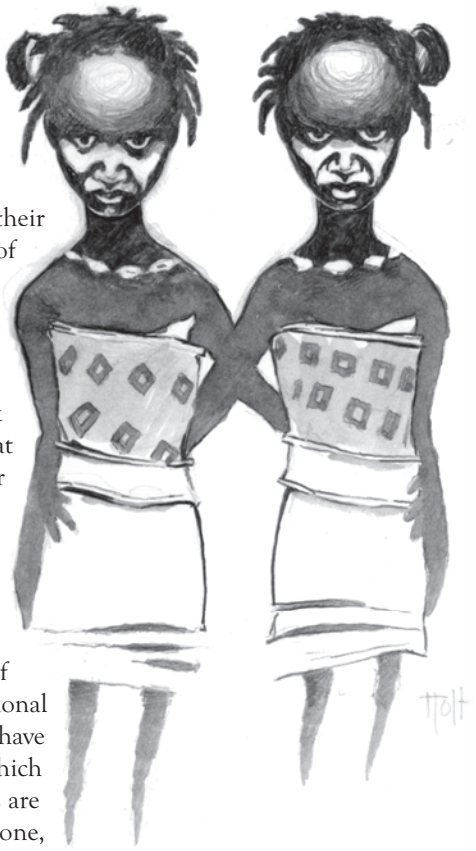
Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 5 **Legend Points:** 25

Other Notes: A gashadokuro also possesses all the powers of a normal spectre but rarely bothers to use them, opting instead to crush his prey underfoot.

MARASSA

In the religion of Voodoo, the term "Marassa" is used to denote the concept of the "Divine Twins." Twins are considered very significant to the religion. When one twin dies, she is often thought to watch over her sibling for the rest of the sibling's life. When both die simultaneously, the resulting spirits are considered very powerful and must be placated with rituals and offerings.



Among the Scions of the Loa, marassa are said to be ghostly twins who appear intermittently to give guidance and occasionally to demand performance of some task. The Loa recognize the power of the marassa, but do not consider the twins to be among their number. Instead, marassa exist outside the Loa hierarchy but are recognized as having influence near that of Legba himself.

The true nature of the marassa is one that the Loa conceal from their Scions—when twins die and become marassa, they become servants of Fate itself. As such, the power of each set of marassa is vast, but their methods and goals are nearly inscrutable. Some will aid Loa Scions, while others will present opposition, all depending on Fate's grand scheme.

Marassa manifest as twin ghosts who always dress alike and speak in unison. Nearly all of them are of African descent. If the twins died at different ages, both twins will appear as the age at which the younger one died. Therefore, a disproportionate number of marassa manifest as children. Despite all the dangers they face in their lives, most Scions who deal with marassa consider young child ghosts who speak in perfect unison to be incredibly creepy.

No traits are provided for the marassa, who exist principally as talking plot devices. Marassa never directly intervene in the affairs of the living, but exist mainly as a tool for plot exposition and the occasional deus ex machina. As direct agents of Fate, they can be assumed to have extensive power over the Magic, Mystery and Prophecy Purviews, which can be put at the players' characters' disposal... if the proper sacrifices are made. Any being capable of detaining a marassa, let alone destroying one, tampers with the workings of Fate itself and does so at her peril.

THE UNDEAD

While ghosts and spectres in the service of the Titans can be a danger to Scions, they pale in comparison to those foul creatures that walk the razor's edge between life and death. Called the undead, each of these beings was once a mortal brought to the brink of death but allowed to go no farther. Instead, their souls were prevented from moving on to the Underworld and trapped within their own corpses by the chthonic power of the Titans. The resulting creatures are highly intelligent and powerful animate corpses gifted with powerful supernatural abilities and an unquenchable thirst for the life force of mortals... and Scions. There are a variety of undead species across the World—the Greek vrykolakas, the African adze, the Japanese jikininki, the Aztec camazotz—but most Scions, ignorant of a creature's pedigree, might simply call it a vampire.

Like the vampires of popular culture, an undead is an animated corpse. Unlike the hungry corpse (see **Scion: Hero**, pp. 294–295), however, the undead usually appears to be human rather than a decaying body. To maintain its existence, an undead must somehow feed off of the living. Most commonly, an undead gains sustenance through drinking the blood of living people, but some cultural variations require a different diet, such as human flesh, bones or even excrement. Undead invariably have superhuman strength and endurance, amazing quickness and limited mind-control powers. Individual undead can have even more unusual abilities depending on their cultural heritage, as each of the Titans granted their own variations on the undead theme. All undead are nearly immortal, however—the only way to permanently kill one is to cut off his head and then burn the head and body separately. Anything less will be insufficient, as the creature will simply re-form the next night.

Undead have a strong aversion to direct sunlight, fire, garlic and the holy symbols of any religion, provided that they are brandished by an actual believer in that religion. An undead must roll his (Intelligence + Integrity) to approach any of these effects (with the difficulty determined by the nature of the exposure), and direct skin contact with any of them causes aggravated damage. The amount of aggravated damage varies according to the stimulus. For example, two individuals each brandishing holy water might inflict different amounts of damage depending on the intensity of their respective faiths.

The following template is typical of a younger undead. Older and more powerful undead typically avoid direct confrontation with young Scions, acting instead through proxies. Such elder monsters are usually far too powerful

for anything less than an experienced demigod to face. After the template come several cultural variations on the standard.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3; Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Virtues: Ambition 3, Malice 3, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Academics 3, Animal Ken 2, Art (Any One) 2, Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Brawl 4, Command 4, Control (Any One) 1, Craft (Any One) 1, Empathy 4, Fortitude 4, Integrity 4, Investigation 2, Larceny 3, Marksmanship 1, Medicine 1, Melee 5, Occult 3, Politics 1, Presence 5, Science (Any One) 1, Stealth 3, Survival 1, Thrown 1

Supernatural Powers:

Claws and Fangs: Undead typically have retractable claws and fangs that are not noticeable unless they choose to attack. These claws and fangs inflict +2L damage.

Cursed Blood: The blood of all types of undead confers benefits equivalent to Jotunblut 4. Some powerful undead can grant their thralls even greater benefits, although (contrary to popular tales) only the most powerful of undead—those with Legend ratings of 8 or higher—can transform a mortal into an undead creature.

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 2 (Crushing Grip, Uplifting Might), Epic Dexterity 4 (Cat's Grace, Lightning Sprinter, Monkey Climber, Divine Balance, Spider Climber), Epic Stamina 2 (Damage Conversion, Self-Healing), Epic Charisma 1 (Charmer), Epic Manipulation 2 (Overt Order, Instant Hypnosis), Epic Perception 1 (Predatory Focus), Epic Appearance 4 (All Knacks from **Scion: Hero**)

Invulnerability: While an undead being can be killed through physical violence, it will re-form its body the next night, no matter how badly damaged it is. If the undead is decapitated and the head and body are burned separately, however, the undead will die permanently.

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Bite: Accuracy 9, Damage 7L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Clinch: Accuracy 8, Damage 5L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 7, Damage 10L, Parry DV 10, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 9, Damage 7L, Parry DV 12, Speed 4

Soak: 2A/4L/6B

Health Levels: -0x9/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 14 **Willpower:** 7

Legend: 5 (higher individual undead) **Legend Points:** 25

Trophy: Undead have no innate trophy, but most are loyal servants of the Titans with access to powerful relics.

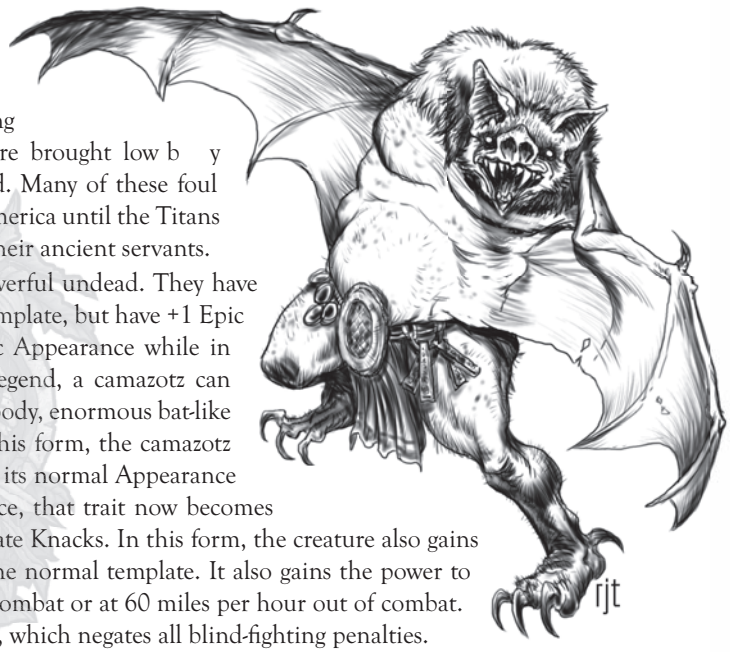
Other Notes: Undead treat firearms attacks as inflicting bashing damage only.

ADZE

Originally limited to the Ewe people of what are currently the nations of Ghana, Benin and Togo, the adze have spread out across most of sub-Saharan Africa, and some have relocated to the Caribbean, where they challenge Scions of the Loa. A powerful adze was thought to hide in the slums of New Orleans before Hurricane Katrina devastated that city.

Adze are relatively weak undead. An adze differs from the standard template only in its shapeshifting powers—the creature can assume the form of a small insect resembling a firefly as a reflexive action with no cost. While in this form, the adze is difficulty to see (+4 dice to Stealth rolls), and the insect's sting paralyses any victim whose player fails a reflexive (Stamina + Fortitude) roll, with a difficulty equal to the adze's Legend. Adze regain Legend by draining the blood of children, regaining one Legend point per child slain. They gain no sustenance from the blood of anyone over the age of nine, *except* from Scions. The blood of a slain Scion confers one point of Legend for every point of permanent Legend the Scion had.

CAMAZOTZ

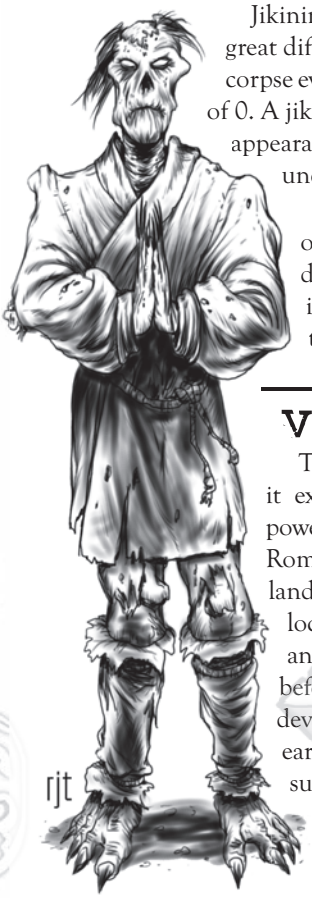


Among the most powerful of undead, the camazotz actively ruled parts of South and Central America as the heads of Titan-worshipping societies as early as 100 BCE before they were brought low b y Scions of the Atzlánti and forced underground. Many of these foul creatures hid in lost caverns throughout Mesoamerica until the Titans broke free from their prison and called out to their ancient servants.

A camazotz is typically an exceptionally powerful undead. They have all the characteristics of the standard undead template, but have +1 Epic Charisma, +1 Epic Manipulation and +2 Epic Appearance while in their normal form. By spending a point of Legend, a camazotz can assume a chiropteran war-form giving it a hairy body, enormous bat-like wings and bat-like facial features and ears. In this form, the camazotz loses its Epic Charisma and Manipulation, and its normal Appearance drops to 0. While it retains its Epic Appearance, that trait now becomes negative, with the camazotz limited to appropriate Knacks. In this form, the creature also gains +1 Epic Strength and +1 Epic Dexterity over the normal template. It also gains the power to fly at three times its normal movement rate in combat or at 60 miles per hour out of combat. Finally, the bat-creature gains chiropteran sonar, which negates all blind-fighting penalties.

A camazotz regains Legend through devouring the hearts of mortals, at a rate of one Legend point per heart. When the creature devours the heart of a Scion, it gains one Legend per point of permanent Legend possessed by the Scion.

JIKININKI



Jikininki are cannibalistic undead found in Japanese legend. Unlike other undead, jikininki have great difficulty in concealing their true nature. Normally, a jikininki appears to be a decomposing corpse even if it's been dead for only a few hours. As such, all jikininki normally have an Appearance of 0. A jikininki can alleviate this penalty for a scene, by spending a Legend point and restoring his appearance to whatever it was before death. Jikininki have all the normal characteristics of the undead template, but are more agile than usual, adding +2 Epic Dexterity.

Jikininki regain Legend by devouring the bodies of recently deceased mortals, at a rate of one point of Legend per point of Stamina the deceased had in life. When the jikininki's meal is a Scion, he additionally gains Legend equal to the late Scion's Legend rating.

VRYKOLAKAS

The vrykolakas is the origin of the vampire as it exists in modern popular culture. Originally a powerful undead indigenous to Greece and later Rome, the vrykolakas were driven from their ancestral lands to the Slavic lands to the north. There, the locals called them by other names—"nosferatu" and, later, "vampyre." Regardless of its appearance before death, the standard vrykolakas quickly develops a rat-like visage, with a bald head, pointed ears, sharp teeth and a pointed, hook-like nose. As such, a vrykolakas's Appearance drops to 1 and can never be raised. Vrykolakas can purchase Epic Appearance Knacks, but only negative ones.

Vrykolakas are stronger than most undead, gaining +2 Epic Strength and +3 Epic Stamina. While hideous by most standards, they are skilled at mind control, gaining +3 Epic Manipulation. Normally, a vrykolakas regains Legend only by

drinking the blood of a mortal virgin (defined for this purpose as one who has never had sexual intercourse with a person of the opposite sex). For each mortal virgin slain by the vrykolakas in this manner, the creature gains one Legend. A vrykolakas can gain sustenance from a Scion regardless of the victim's virginity, regaining one Legend for every point of permanent Legend the Scion has.

THE TITANSPAWN

As was the case in **Scion: Hero**, the titanspawn in this chapter can be divided into multiple categories. Chimerae are creatures that combine the traits of multiple animals into a garish new life form. There are more giants to fight, but these elder giants are far more cunning and dangerous than the dumb lunks of the previous book. Minions are entire races of grotesqueries, most of whom are eager servants of the Titans.

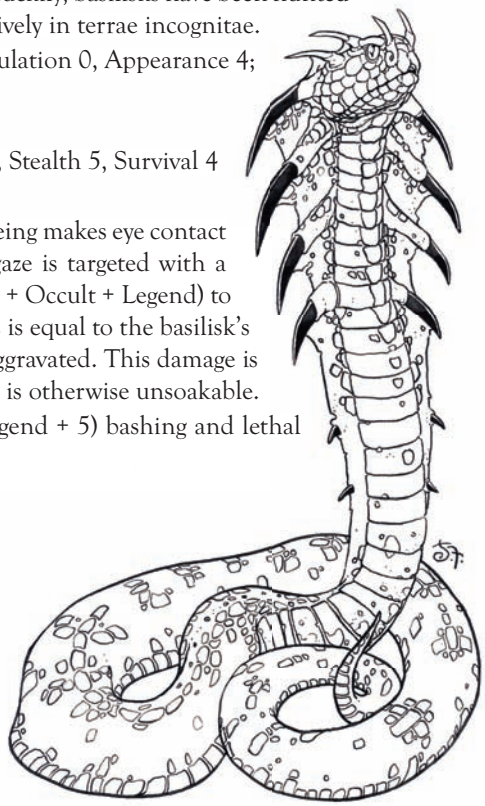
CHIMERAE

Chimerae at this level of power are truly weapons of mass destruction. Many of them have powers that can slay all but the most skilled or well-protected Scions with a touch or even a glance. Others are enjoy a limited invulnerability and can be killed only by beings with a higher Legend rating. Scions who don't measure up can't defeat such a titanspawn; they can only hope to contain it.

BASILISK

The Romans called the basilisk "the lord of serpents" because the large crest behind its head reminded sages of a crown. More accurate observers of the beast might describe it as an enormous cobra, although such observers are rare, since mere eye contact with the basilisk is potentially lethal. The typical basilisk is a greenish-black serpent reaching about 20 feet long from tip to tail and about a foot in diameter at its widest point. Behind its head, the basilisk has a crest of black spines reminiscent of a crown. Its eyes glow with an unholy green light, usually the last things an observer ever sees.

Basilisks are not intelligent creatures, but they do have a low animal cunning. Like most chimerae, they can scent Scions at great range and will pursue such prey preferentially. Luckily, basilisks have been hunted nearly to extinction in the World and are now found almost exclusively in terrae incognitae.



Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 6, Stamina 6; Charisma 1, Manipulation 0, Appearance 4; Perception 4, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Virtues: Ambition 1, Malice 3, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 1

Abilities: Athletics 5, Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Fortitude 4, Integrity 1, Stealth 5, Survival 4

Supernatural Powers:

Deadly Gaze: A basilisk's eyes glow constantly. Whenever any living being makes eye contact with the basilisk, that being risks serious damage. The basilisk's gaze is targeted with a (Perception + Awareness + Legend) roll, resisted by the target's (Wits + Occult + Legend) to determine if the target can keep his eyes averted. The damage bonus is equal to the basilisk's Legend (3 to 5 depending on the basilisk's age), and all damage is aggravated. This damage is negated completely if the target is fighting blind (at a -4 penalty) but is otherwise unsoakable.

Tough Hide: The basilisk's hide is supernaturally tough, adding (Legend + 5) bashing and lethal soak.

Join Battle: 8

Attacks:

Bite: Accuracy 10, Damage 13L, Parry DV 5, Speed 5

Clinch: Accuracy 11, Damage 7B, Parry DV –, Speed 6, P

Soak: 11L/14B (young basilisks), 13L/16B (old basilisks)

Health Levels: -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 7 or 8 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 3 to 5 **Legend Points:** 9 to 25

Trophy: The eyes of a basilisk glow with a light bright enough to fully illuminate a large room when fed a single point of Legend.

They can also pierce any form of supernatural darkness created by a being whose Legend rating is less than that of the basilisk's at a cost of one Legend point. Either effect lasts for one scene. The eyes are actually made of brass and will never rot or decay.

Other Notes: None

CERBERUS, GUARDIAN OF THE GATES OF HADES

After the Titans were first imprisoned, not all of their monstrous agents were destroyed or exiled—some were put to work. For example, Cerberus, the massive three-headed hound, was enchanted to serve Hades and bound to the entrance of his kingdom to prevent the living from entering and interacting with the dead. The great beast remained there for centuries, save for a brief excursion to the World as part of one of Heracles' legendary labors. Then, the Titans broke free, and Cerberus was unleashed.

Exactly where Cerberus might now be encountered is a question of Storyteller discretion. Perhaps Cerberus has left the Greek underworld and wandered into the deadlands associated with some other pantheon, such as Helheim or Duat. Perhaps he has emerged somewhere in the World, where he now terrorizes locals.

Regardless, Cerberus is a fairly stupid beast, no smarter than the typical feral dog. The beast is immense, roughly the length of a Greyhound bus and twice as tall. Each of his three mouths can swallow a man whole, and his saliva is a poison so deadly that it instantly causes poisonous plants to sprout from the ground where it lands. Each head possesses a mane of deadly snakes, and his tail is a venomous serpent as well. Scions tracking the great hound may be drawn to his location by reports of a massive increase in the number of poisoning victims in an area. (When Cerberus attacks, the "extra attacks" of all these snakes are incorporated directly into his high Accuracy and Damage bonuses.)

Although Cerberus is a titanspawn and an incredibly dangerous one, he does not actively seek out Scions as other titanspawn do, though he will readily fight one who attacks or startles him. Yet despite his heritage, he is (relatively speaking) a good and loyal pet to Hades. A Scion of Hades might be able to control him, and any Scion who can bind him with a chain forged by Hephaestus (or a similar master of the forge) can lead him back to Hades' realm, and thereby earn a mighty reward from the Death God. Cerberus will never serve as a Birthright Creature, however, and would-be owners will have a terrible time even containing him, let alone commanding him. A Scion who slays the beast, regardless of the circumstances, will earn Hades' eternal enmity.

Attributes: Strength 20, Dexterity 7, Stamina 20; Charisma 0, Manipulation 0, Appearance 5; Perception 5, Intelligence 1, Wits 4

Virtues: Malice 3, Rapacity 3, Vengeance 2, Zealotry 1. Millennia of "obedience training" by Hades has replaced the normal Dark Virtue of Ambition with the traditional Dodekatheon Virtue of Vengeance, usually directed against the targets of Hades' ire.

Abilities: Athletics 5, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Fortitude 5, Integrity 3, Presence 4, Survival 3

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 5 (All Knacks from **Scion: Hero**, plus Divine Rampage), Epic Stamina 3 (All Knacks from **Scion: Hero**)

Three Heads: Cerberus gets three fully independent attacks per action, one for each head.

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Bite: Accuracy 11, Damage 26L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Claw: Accuracy 13, Damage 23L, Parry DV —, Speed 4

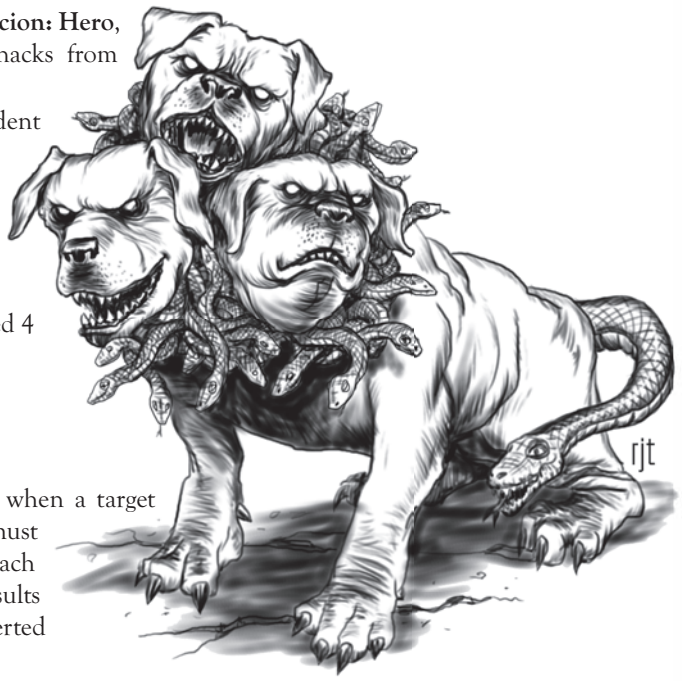
Soak: 3A/14L/24B

Health Levels: -0x24/Incap

Dodge DV: 10 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 7 **Legend Points:** 49

Other Notes: Cerberus's bite is poisonous, and when a target suffers a single level of damage, his player must immediately roll (Stamina + Fortitude). For each point by which Cerberus's Legend exceeds the results on this roll, one point of damage inflicted is converted into aggravated damage.



THE GORGONS

The two surviving Gorgons, Stheno and Euryale, are among the most dangerous of the titanspawn who stalk the World. Filled with a cold fury toward the Gods and their Scions over the death of their sister, Medusa, the Gorgons most often work behind the scenes, directing the medusae (see **Scion: Hero**, pp. 320–322) and other minion races against the Scions. The two schemers rarely interact directly with Scions unless they are certain of their superiority to their enemies, as only a Scion whose Legend rating exceeds that of a Gorgon has any realistic chance of killing her.

Stheno is the older and more powerful of the two, but she is also the most emotional and most prone to make tactical mistakes, such as rushing into battle heedless of the possibility of death. In particular, she is quite easy to manipulate through her grief over Medusa's death, even though millennia have passed since that took place. Euryale is far more calculating and will almost always flee rather than engage a Scion whose power level she has not carefully evaluated. (Euryale also privately thinks that Medusa was an arrogant fool who got what was coming to her, although she is not likely to mention that opinion when Stheno is around.)

The two sisters have several powers in common. First, each is immortal and suffers no damage inflicted by beings with lower Legend ratings. Of course, not taking damage is quite different from not suffering any ill effects. Collapsing a mountain on top of a Gorgon won't kill her, but it will confine her until she can dig her way out, a process which might take centuries if the Gorgon doesn't get any help from an outside source. Also, as Medusa discovered to her great surprise, some attacks are capable of bypassing a Gorgon's natural immunity. For example, a Scion who managed to find the legendary Harpe (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 166) might be able to kill a Gorgon regardless of his Legend rating, as the weapon is specifically enchanted to bypass the magical effects of invulnerability. In fact, even a mortal could slay a Gorgon with the sword if he could bypass the creature's other defenses and land a good enough blow. For this reason, the two sisters hunt for the lost sword incessantly, and often to the exclusion of their other duties to the Titans.

Another power of the Gorgons is the one for which their sister was most famous—the power of petrifaction. While the Gorgons are able to hide their true visage behind illusions of humanity when they wish, each of the sisters is so hideous in her true form that looking at her can be instantly crippling if not fatal.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5; Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 6; Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Virtues: Ambition 3, Malice 4, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 3

Abilities: Academics 1, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Command 2, Empathy 2, Fortitude 5, Integrity 4, Investigation 3, Marksmanship 5, Melee 4, Occult 3, Presence 3, Stealth 3

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 5 (All Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and this book), Epic Dexterity 4 (All Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and this book), Epic Appearance 6 (All Knacks, except beauty-themed ones, from **Scion: Hero** and this book)

Illusion: Each Gorgon can temporarily conceal her hideousness behind a veil of illusion for a scene at a cost of one Legend point. This illusion can affect only mortals and even then, the Gorgon inevitably appears as an ugly woman (Appearance 1). Scions and Gods automatically see through this illusion.

Invulnerability: Both Gorgons ignore all damage inflicted by natural phenomena and by individuals with lower Legend ratings.

Petrifaction: Whenever any being less than a God (i.e., Legend 8 or lower) looks upon the true face of a Gorgon, his player must roll the character's (Wits + Awareness) to determine if he can avert his gaze before fully making eye contact. The observer must garner a number of successes equal to the Gorgon's Legend rating to avoid harm. For every success by which the observer falls short of the mark, he loses one dot of Dexterity. In the case of Scions, Epic Dexterity is lost first. If an observer's Dexterity is reduced to 0, his entire body (including clothing and possessions) turns to stone. The only known way to restore a petrified individual is to slay the Gorgon who transformed him, although, at the Storyteller's discretion, another cure might be available after an epic quest.

Tough Hide: The leathery skin of a Gorgon is incredibly tough, adding 10 bashing and lethal soak and 5 aggravated soak.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 8, Damage 6L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 7, Damage 9L, Parry DV 10, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 9, Damage 6L, Parry DV 12, Speed 4

Xiphos: Accuracy 9, Damage 9A (see "Other Notes"), Parry DV 12, Speed 4

Bow: Accuracy 10, Damage 8A (see "Other Notes"), Range 30, Speed 6, P

Soak: 5A/13L/15B

Health Levels: -0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 15 (Stheno), 14 (Euryale) **Willpower:** 7

Legend: 7 (Stheno), 6 (Euryale) **Legend Points:** 49 (Stheno), 36 (Euryale)

Trophy: The trophy of a Gorgon is her head, if you can get it. The monster's petrifaction power continues to work after she is dead and her head has been removed. Once the head is secured, a being capable of forging relics can affix the Gorgon's face to a shield or buckler (or even a T-shirt if he wants) to create an aegis. An aegis shield applies its normal soak and hardness to all forms of aggravated damage. Also, the player of an aegis bearer can spend a point of Legend and roll (Charisma + Intimidation + the Gorgon's Legend), resisted by the (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) of anyone who gazes upon the hideous face. Those who are affected must flee in terror. Once attached to the aegis, the Gorgon face loses its petrifaction power, but until then, the smith who works with it must do so blindfolded or he risks petrifaction as well (assuming he isn't a God).

Other Notes: Both Gorgons typically coat their weapons with snake venom from their serpent-crowned heads. Injuries from such venom-coated weapons inflict aggravated damage.

THE HYDRA

The original Lernaean Hydra was a giant serpent with nine heads that guarded an access point to the Underworld beneath Lake Lerna. The mouth of each head dripped one of the deadliest toxins ever devised, and when any head was cut off, it grew two replacement heads. Perhaps worst of all, one of the original nine heads was immortal, and could not be slain by a then-mortal Heracles. Doing the best he could under the circumstances, Heracles managed to defeat the beast by cutting off its mortal heads one at a time and then using fire to cauterize the wound before the replacement heads could grow back. Then, he chopped off the remaining head and buried it under a boulder. Unfortunately, when you're talking about immortal titanspawn, nothing stays buried forever.

When the Titans broke free, the seismic wake of their passing burst out through the soggy Greek marshland that was all that remained of Lake Lerna. The low-level earthquake that resulted was barely noticeable to seismologists, but it was enough to shift the eight-ton boulder that had contained the Hydra's one remaining head for millennia. Once free of its prison, the Hydra quickly regenerated. It remains in the same area still, however, its tiny reptile brain remembering instructions from its Titan masters. Soon, Scions will come seeking entry to the Underworld as part of their quest for apotheosis. Then, the Hydra will feed.

The Hydra is a 30-foot-long serpent with a three-foot-diameter trunk, all covered with dark-green scales. Currently, it has only three heads, but one of them is almost immune to injury, while the other two will regenerate two heads in their place if cut off. The Hydra will also sprout one additional head every time it devours a Scion. The Hydra's poison is weaker than it was at its peak, but it's still a potent venom. The Hydra also has a poisonous breath, and the player of anyone within 10 feet must roll (Stamina + Fortitude) for her character to resist secondary poison effects.

Attributes: Strength 10, Dexterity 10, Stamina 10; Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 0; Perception 6, Intelligence 2, Wits 5

Virtues: Ambition 1, Malice 3, Rapacity 5, Zealotry 1

Abilities: Athletics 5, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Fortitude 4, Integrity 2, Presence 5, Survival 4

Supernatural Powers:

Extra Heads: The Hydra has multiple heads, each of which gets an independent attack in combat. Each head also has its own independent damage track.

Invulnerability: One of the Hydra's heads ignores all damage inflicted by characters with a Legend rating below 7. If all the other heads are permanently destroyed, however, the final head can be severed from the trunk by inflicting five levels of damage on it in a single attack. It will regenerate a new body within one hour unless prevented, however. Heracles prevented this by burying the head so that it had no room to grow.

Poison: The Hydra's internal poison causes its bite attacks to inflict aggravated damage. Indeed, the creature's breath is so poisonous that anyone coming within 10 feet of it takes one die of aggravated damage every five ticks unless she has some type of breathing apparatus or else can hold her breath while fighting a deadly monster.

Regeneration (Body): The Hydra's body regenerates at a phenomenal rate, healing a number of lethal damage levels equal to *its current number of heads* every three ticks, even if the body has been reduced to below Incapacitated. Practically speaking, the only way to defeat the Hydra is to go after its heads.

Regeneration (Heads): The Hydra currently has three heads, one invulnerable and two normal. The prime head is slightly larger than the others and has a distinctive marking on its brow (requires a successful [Perception + Occult] roll to recognize while the heads bob and weave among each other). Each head has its own damage track with 10 health levels (all -0 levels). The prime head ignores all damage inflicted by a being with a Legend rating below 7, but the other heads can be harmed normally. When a head suffers 10 levels of lethal damage, that head is severed from the main body. If the hero can then cauterize the wound by inflicting an additional five points of lethal fire damage (or aggravated damage from any source) on the stump, the head will not regrow. Otherwise, the stump will sprout *two* heads in place of the one there before in six ticks. Each new head has a fresh health track.

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Bite: Accuracy 14, Damage 16A, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Clinch: Accuracy 15, Damage 11B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Soak: 5L/10B

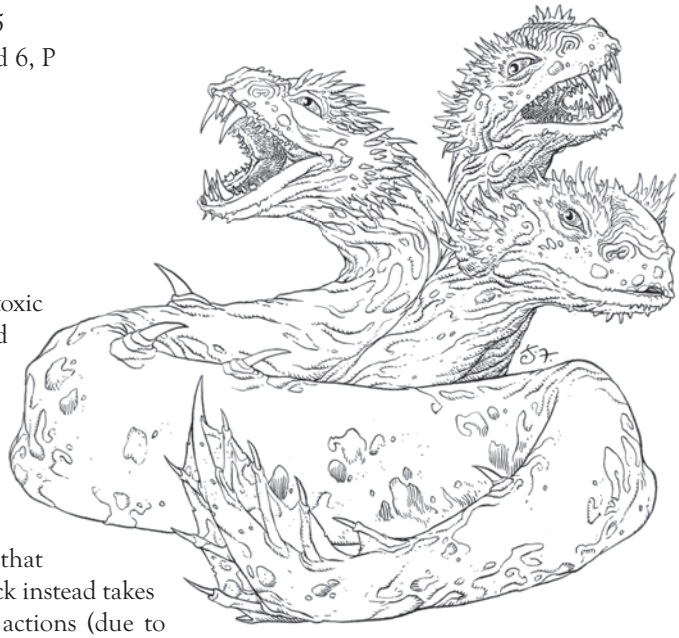
Health Levels:

The Main Body: -0x5/-1x5/-2x5/-4x5/Incap

Each Individual Head: -0x10

Dodge DV: 11 **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 7 **Legend Points:** 49



Trophy: The blood of the Hydra is among the most toxic poisons ever known. If applied to arrowheads, bladed weapons or even bullets, it causes those weapons to inflict aggravated damage. Even creatures with a Legend-based Invulnerability supernatural power can be injured by such weapons, even if the Scion wielding the weapon has a Legend rating too low to inflict damage. Instead, roll all attacks and damage as if the target were not invulnerable. The damage that would normally be inflicted on the target's health track instead takes the form of an internal penalty on *all* the target's actions (due to maddening pain) until the poison is cured.

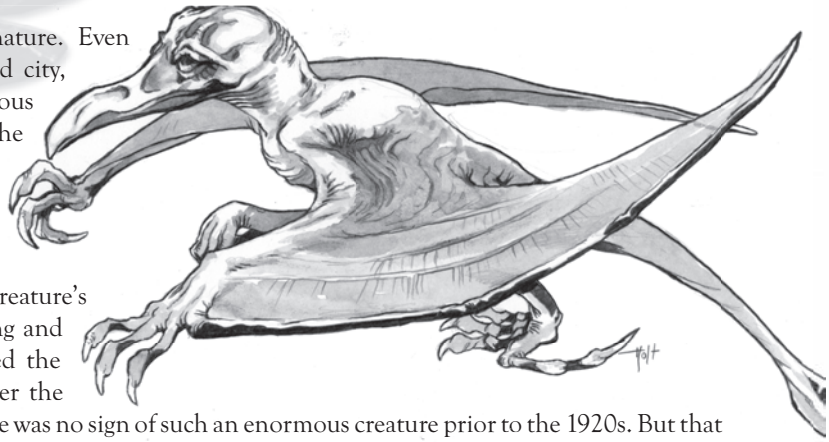
Other Notes: None

KONGAMATO

The kongamato is less a mythic creature and more of an urban legend. Since at least 1923, native villagers in Central Africa have reported encounters with a massive, bat-like reptile large enough to snatch up a man in its claws and carry him away. They named the creature "kongamato," which means "overwhelmer of boats," and when shown illustrations of pterodactyls, the natives insisted that the kongamato looks exactly like the long-extinct dinosaur. Since then, cryptozoologists have scoured Africa for signs that the kongamato exists and is some kind of pterosaur that has survived to the modern day. They are half right. The kongamato exists, but it has nothing to do with dinosaurs.

In fact, the kongamato appear to be a new type of chimera, a highly aggressive flying creature created from African bats and lizards fused together by the power of the Titans. Though unintelligent, the kongamato are cunning—and reclusive. Save for a few incidents over the last 80 years, they have successfully spread from Zambia throughout much of the World without the human race discovering their existence.

Scions have been less fortunate. The Titans bred kongamato as hunters, first and foremost, and a kongamato can smell a Scion from miles away. As such, they are often used by more intelligent titanspawn for Scion-hunting in much the same way mortal falconers use birds of prey to lead them to game. In addition to flight and heightened perception, kongamato also have built-in camouflage, a product of the chameleons and similar lizards incorporated



into the titanspawns' composite nature. Even when one flies through a populated city, few mortals ever notice the enormous predator swooping overhead, as the creature effortlessly blends in with its surroundings.

Yet the most disturbing facet of the kongamato, to the Gods at least, is the mystery surrounding the creature's origin. The various Gods of learning and knowledge have carefully categorized the various types of known chimera over the centuries, and they all agree that there was no sign of such an enormous creature prior to the 1920s. But that was long before the Titans broke free from their prison. So who created this new and deadly monstrosity?

Kongamato, when at rest, generally appear to be red, scaly pterosaurs, although any paleontologist would instantly see that they are not truly dinosaurs. Their heads are shaped more like those of bats, although the creature's snout extends out into a sharp beak. When in flight, the kongamato's natural camouflage kicks in. A young kongamato's wingspan is typically about six or seven feet, while an adult's can reach up to 20 or so. Even larger specimens have been produced by including magical components, such as giant blood, into the newly hatched kongamato's diet. Dubbed "baby Rodans" by the Scions who have survived encounters, these kongamato seem to have no limits to their potential growth, with specimens reaching up to 50 feet in wingspan. Such a specially bred monster gains two dots each in Epic Strength and Stamina and one dot in Epic Dexterity over the standard adult template. Thus far, there are only about 30 kongamato in the World, only five of which are of the giant variety.

The numbers in parentheses reflect the adult kongamato.

Attributes: Strength 7 (9), Dexterity 7, Stamina 7 (9); Charisma 1, Manipulation 0, Appearance 1; Perception 5, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Virtues: Ambition 1, Malice 2, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Athletics 5 [+3 while airborne], Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Fortitude 2 (4), Integrity 2, Stealth 5, Survival 2

Supernatural Powers:

Camouflage: Kongamato have a natural camouflage while in flight, similar to that of a chameleon but much more effective. While a chameleon can maintain its camouflage only while sitting still, a kongamato can fly at top speed and still effortlessly blend its skin to match whatever surface is behind it. Even those who spot the kongamato in flight will only see it as a giant, bat-shaped blur. Passive attempts to spot a kongamato in flight (i.e., a [Perception + Awareness] roll when the character has no reason to suspect danger) suffer a -5 internal penalty. A character actively looking for danger suffers only a -3 internal penalty. Of course, both of these rolls are still opposed by the creature's natural Stealth.

Epic Attributes (giant kongamato only): Epic Strength 2 (Crushing Grip, Uplifting Might), Epic Dexterity 1 (Lightning Sprinter), Epic Stamina 2 (Damage Conversion, Inner Furnace)

Flight: Kongamato can fly at speeds of up to 60 miles per hour out of combat. Giant kongamato can fly at four times that speed. In combat, a kongamato multiplies its movement rate by seven. Kongamato are fairly clumsy while on the ground, and grounded kongamato suffer a mobility penalty of -3.

Sonic Boom (giant kongamato only): A giant kongamato can dive so fast that the onrush of air from its mighty wings as it pulls out of the dive can shatter windows and knock Scions to the ground. Mechanically, this power functions exactly like the Shock Wave Knack (see p. 55), except that instead of striking the ground, the creature must fly over the target area at its top speed.

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Bite: Accuracy 11, Damage 11L (13L), Parry DV —, Speed 5

Claws: Accuracy 13, Damage 8L (10L), Parry DV —, Speed 4

Soak: 4L/7B (5L/9B); 2A/7L/11B [giant]

Health Levels:

Normal Kongamato: -0x4/-1x4/-2x4/-4x3/Incap

Giant Kongamato: -0x12/-4x5/Incap

Dodge DV: 6 on ground; 10 airborne [7 and 11 for giant kongamato] **Willpower:** 5

Legend: 5 [7 for giant kongamato] **Legend Points:** 25 [49 for giant kongamato]

Trophy: The trophy for a young kongamato is its tongue, which, when cured and then held up to a Scion's ear, hums softly whenever another Scion is within one mile. The adult kongamato provides that benefit and potentially one more—if the creature is skinned and its leathery hide carefully prepared, the hide can be used to make leather clothing, ideally a trench coat or something similar. If a Scion wears clothing made from kongamato hide that covers the majority of her body and she spends on point of Legend, she gains the kongamato's gift of camouflage for the duration of a scene. This benefit confers a -5 internal penalty on all attempts by others to spot the Scion, reduced to a -3 penalty if observers are actively searching the area. A giant kongamato yields enough useful skin to make three such garments.

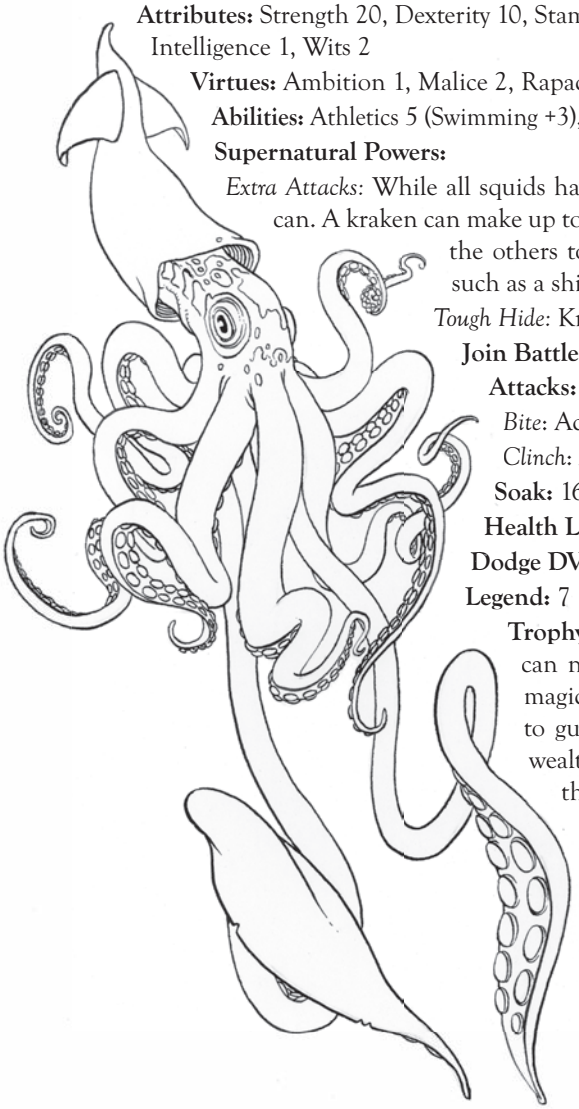
Other Notes: None

KRAKEN

There is a wide variety of monstrous beasts powered by the foul blood of the Titans. Almost any mundane animal can be transformed into a gigantic nightmare monster known as a nemean (see **Scion: Hero**, pp. 312–313). But what happens when a Titan transforms an already titanic creature into a nemean? The result is a monster that even demigods must fear. One such monster is the kraken, an immense nemean created from the already fearsome colossal squid.

A normal colossal squid (the largest member of the squid family and the largest invertebrate in the World) measures as long as 46 feet from the tip of its head to the end of its tentacles. A kraken dwarfs its mundane cousin, stretching more than 200 feet in length.

Krakens are rare and mercifully infertile. When the Titans were bound into Tartarus, only one was known to still exist, and it receded to the safety of the ocean depths. Today, the Gods suspect there may be as many as three of these living weapons of mass destruction in the Titan arsenal: the original Kraken, which was last seen in the Indian Ocean, a Japanese version called the Akkorokamui, which hunts in the Sea of Japan, and a third beast sighted off the coast of Tierra del Fuego in Argentina. The following template applies to each of these three specimens.



Attributes: Strength 20, Dexterity 10, Stamina 12; Charisma 0, Manipulation 0, Appearance 0; Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

Virtues: Ambition 1, Malice 2, Rapacity 4, Zealotry 1

Abilities: Athletics 5 (Swimming +3), Awareness 2, Brawl 5, Fortitude 3, Integrity 1, Survival 2, Thrown 4

Supernatural Powers:

Extra Attacks: While all squids have multiple tentacles, few can use them as effectively as a kraken can. A kraken can make up to five independent clinch attacks with its tentacles, while still using the others to maintain its position in the water or to grapple a large object, such as a ship.

Tough Hide: Kraken skin is very tough, adding 10 lethal and bashing soak.

Join Battle: 4

Attacks:

Bite: Accuracy 14, Damage 24L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Clinch: Accuracy 15, Damage 21L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Soak: 16L/22B

Health Levels: -0x5/-1x5/-2x5/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 11 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 7 **Legend Points:** 49

Trophy: The trophy for a kraken is found within its gullet, as the creature can neither digest nor expel materials that are made of gold or have magical properties. Therefore, a Scion with the time and the resources to gut a dead kraken can expect at the very least a great quantity of wealth, and possibly one or more relics. Of course, that assumes that the Scion was able to kill the kraken without losing its body to the sea, which is a very difficult prospect.

Other Notes: None

SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS

According to Homer, Scylla was a many-headed monster who lived on a seaside promontory, while Charybdis was a massive whirlpool just off shore. Odysseus and his crew were forced to sail between the two, and Odysseus was forced to make the Hobson's choice of whether to go too close to Scylla and lose a number of his crew to her appetite or to go too close to Charybdis and risk losing the whole ship. In the modern era, the Titans have brought forth updated versions of these two creatures.

The modern Charybdis greatly resembles its mythological predecessor: a massive whirlpool, nearly half a mile in diameter. The modern Scylla, on the other hand, is one of Ixion's new creations. Built from the remains of an oil derrick acquired by a Titan cult through front companies, Scylla is a metallic monstrosity. Instead of a multitude of heads, Scylla has a half dozen tentacles, each more than 40 yards long, fashioned from scrap metal and human body parts. Each tentacle ends in the torso of a still living person driven mad by Ixion's butchery. The living components of Scylla consist of dozens of former crew members from the oil derrick as well as hundreds of homeless people snatched off the streets of Argentina. The human torso at the end of each tentacle has had his arms replaced by some type of tool from the derrick: buzz saws, drills, hammers, etc. Each tentacle is also capable of completely independent movement, allowing Scylla six fully independent attacks per action.

In order for players' characters to reach their objective (whether the Storyteller uses the adventure in Chapter Five or chooses to use Scylla and Charybdis elsewhere), they must chart a safe course between the two perils. The problem is that there is no safe course. Therefore, the players must declare whether they will err on the side of being too close to Scylla or too close to Charybdis. The roll to chart the *best* course between the two is (Wits + Control [Ship]) at a difficulty of 10. If the character succeeds, he can pilot between the two perils, but faces danger from both. Getting through the gap takes 30 ticks. During that time, Scylla is free to attack the ship and its crew, and the pilot's player must make continual (Wits + Control) rolls at difficulty 5 to keep the ship out of the whirlpool. If the pilot fails to get 10 successes on the first piloting roll, subtract her successes from 10. Then, either give that many bonus dice to Scylla on each of her attacks *or* add that number to the difficulty of the pilot's subsequent rolls to avoid Charybdis, depending on which one the pilot chose to go nearest.

Going closest to Scylla is the safest approach. Scylla can attack and kill individuals, but if the pilot fails on any rolls in dealing with Charybdis, the entire ship *will* go down. Only Scions and fantastically lucky mortals have any chance of surviving being pulled down by Charybdis. See pages 193-197 for more details on using Scylla and Charybdis dramatically.

Scylla

Attributes: Strength 15, Dexterity 10, Stamina 15; Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 0; Perception 5, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Virtues: Ambition 1, Malice 2, Rapacity 5, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Fortitude 2, Integrity 3, Melee 5, Thrown 5

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 5 (All Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and this book appropriate to a creature that can't move), Epic Dexterity 4 (All Knacks from **Scion: Hero** appropriate to a creature that can't move).

Tentacles: On each action, Scylla gets six fully independent actions since each tentacle has a separate "brain." The listed traits apply to each individual tentacle.

Impervious Body: Scylla's "body" is inert and serves no purpose except to support the tentacles. A sufficiently powerful Scion who realizes this fact *might* be able to take out Scylla by destroying the structure that supports the tentacles.

The mechanics of this feat are up to the Storyteller's discretion, but a large oil refinery has, at a minimum, 100 health levels, a soak of 30L/30B and a Hardness of 30.

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 15, Damage 16L, Parry DV —, Speed 6

Powertool: Accuracy 14, Damage 23L, Parry DV 14, Speed 5

Tool: Accuracy 16, Damage 20L, Parry DV 15, Speed 4

Soak: 8L/15B (Hardness 10)

Health Levels: -0x10/Destroyed (each tentacle)

Dodge DV: 17 (tentacles only) **Willpower:** 7

Legend: 5 **Legend Point:** 25

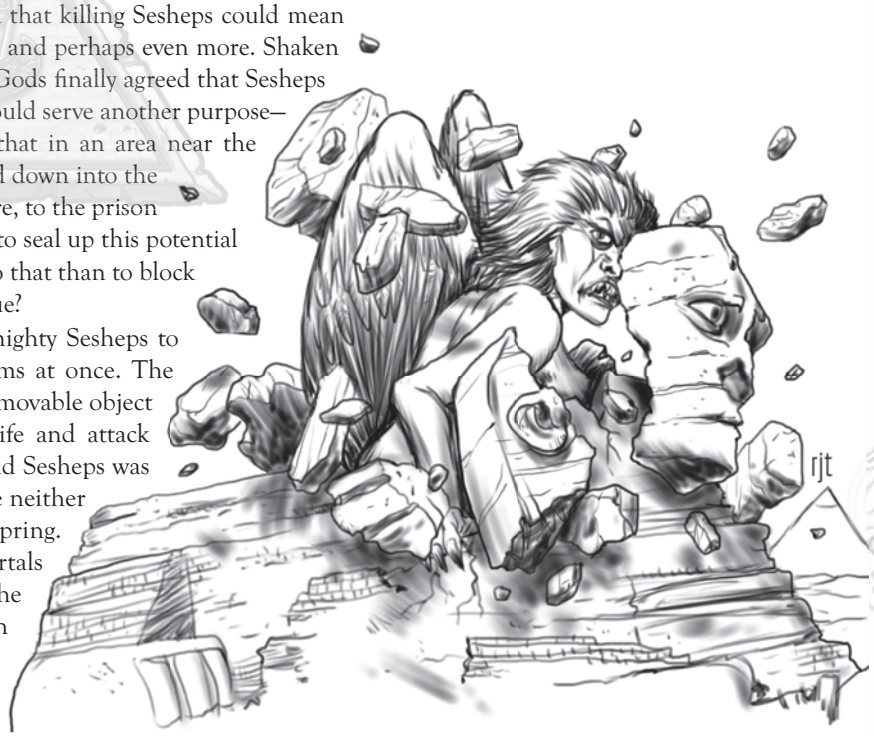
Trophy: Given the circumstances under which Scylla will be encountered, it would take a miracle for a Band to recover a trophy from her body. But miracles do happen. Deep within the heart of the refinery, there is an enormous glass sphere that glows with an unearthly light and speaks in the singsong voice of a small child. This is, for lack of a better word, Scylla's brain. Removed from its body, the brain is childlike and actually rather innocent. It also has considerable knowledge of Ixion and his fleshcrafting techniques and, in the hands of a craftsman with the Arete (Craft) Boon, it might provide clues as to how the victims of Ixion's cruel experiments can be returned to their human forms.

Other Notes: None

SESHEPS, THE GUARDIAN OF THE VALLEY OF KINGS

The Sphinx. The progenitor of an entire titanspawn race (see "Sphinx" on p. 282). This monstrosity was one of the Titans' first great successes as the art of forging titanspawn monsters. Sesheps was a terror in her own right. When fully active, she is over 250 feet long and almost 100 feet tall when standing on all fours (not that she's gotten up in 5,000 years). But she wouldn't be so fearsome if she were just another big monster. No, Sesheps is more. She is the mother of monsters. Capable of parthenogenesis, Sesheps can produce a litter of a dozen smaller sphinxes every six months. She is also highly intelligent and able to instantly know the answer to any question put to her. But her most dangerous weapon is neither her children nor her own physical form nor her intellect. It's her destiny.

When the Pesedjet finally brought Sesheps to heel over five millennia ago, they were prepared to slay the beast then before her offspring could overwhelm the World. Before they could do so, Bastet herself appeared before them to warn them of the danger. For reasons she could not explain, Sesheps was integral to Fate itself. Fate had entrusted to Sesheps some terrible secret that could never be revealed, but at the same time, must not be lost forever. Bastet would say no more, except to warn that killing Sesheps could mean the unmaking of the Pesedjet itself, and perhaps even more. Shaken by Bastet's prophecy, the Egyptian Gods finally agreed that Sesheps would not be killed. Instead, she would serve another purpose—that of guardian. It so happened that in an area near the Great Pyramid was a tunnel that led down into the Egyptian underworld and from there, to the prison of the Titans. The Pesedjet desired to seal up this potential flaw in the prison. How better to do that than to block it off with a 200-ton limestone statue?



And so, the Pesedjet turned mighty Sesheps to stone, thereby solving two problems at once. The gateway was blocked by a nearly immovable object that was enchanted to come to life and attack anyone capable of disturbing it, and Sesheps was preserved for an eternity while able neither to move nor to produce more offspring. In order to reduce the risk of mortals accidentally awakening Sesheps, the Pesedjet also covered her body with a thick layer of limestone. After the Pesedjet withdrew from direct interference with Egypt, various

pharaohs initiated construction projects to modify the Great Sphinx's appearance, most notably to make her look like a male pharaoh instead of a woman.

Today, Sesheps remains in slumber, but can be awoken by any Scion who dares to do so. The process is far more arduous than that of awakening a lesser sphinx. One or more Scions must spend a prodigious 30 Legend points to awaken Sesheps. As per the magic that keeps her bound, Sesheps is permitted to ask a single riddle. If the Scions who awoke her can answer it, she is bound to do one of three things: answer a single question, utter a prophecy or permit entrance into the secret portal to Duat. At the Storyteller's discretion, she might also deliver some other bit of requested deus ex machina. If the Scions fail to answer the riddle, she is free to destroy them if she can. Wise Scions will flee the area, as Sesheps cannot move far from her resting-place, and she will return to her stone form at the end of the scene. Resourceful Scions may distract Sesheps and flee into Duat once she moves (assuming that was their goal). Really dumb Scions will try to fight the monster, knowing that even if they win, they will unleash some horrific disaster on themselves, the Pesedjet, the entire World or all of the above.

Attributes: Strength 30, Dexterity 5, Stamina 15; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2; Perception 4, Intelligence 7, Wits 7

Virtues: Ambition 3, Malice 3, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 3

Abilities: Academics 6, Animal Ken 5, Art (All) 4, Athletics 5, Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Command 4, Empathy 3, Fortitude 5, Integrity 7, Medicine 5, Occult 8, Politics 5, Presence 5, Science (All) 5

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 7 (All Knacks from this book and **Scion: Hero**), Epic Stamina 7 (All Knacks from this book and **Scion: Hero**)

Deadly Claws: Sesheps' claws inflict aggravated damage.

Cosmic Awareness: Sesheps can instantly know the answer to any single question she is asked. Unfortunately for her, she doesn't literally *know* everything. Only when someone else asks her a question does the answer pop into her head.

Tough Hide: Sesheps' body is as hard as stone, resulting in an incredibly high soak value.

Join Battle: 12

Attacks:

Bite: Accuracy 9, Damage 33L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Claws: Accuracy 11, Damage 36A, Parry DV —, Speed 4

Soak: 10A/37L/52B (Hardness 20)

Health Levels: -0x50/Incap

Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 8 **Legend Points:** 64

Trophy: If there is a trophy associated with Sesheps demise, no one knows what it is. The Gods of the Pesedjet insist that, far from receiving a reward, the Scion who slays Sesheps will usher in the doom of the Pesedjet.

Other Notes: None

GIANTS

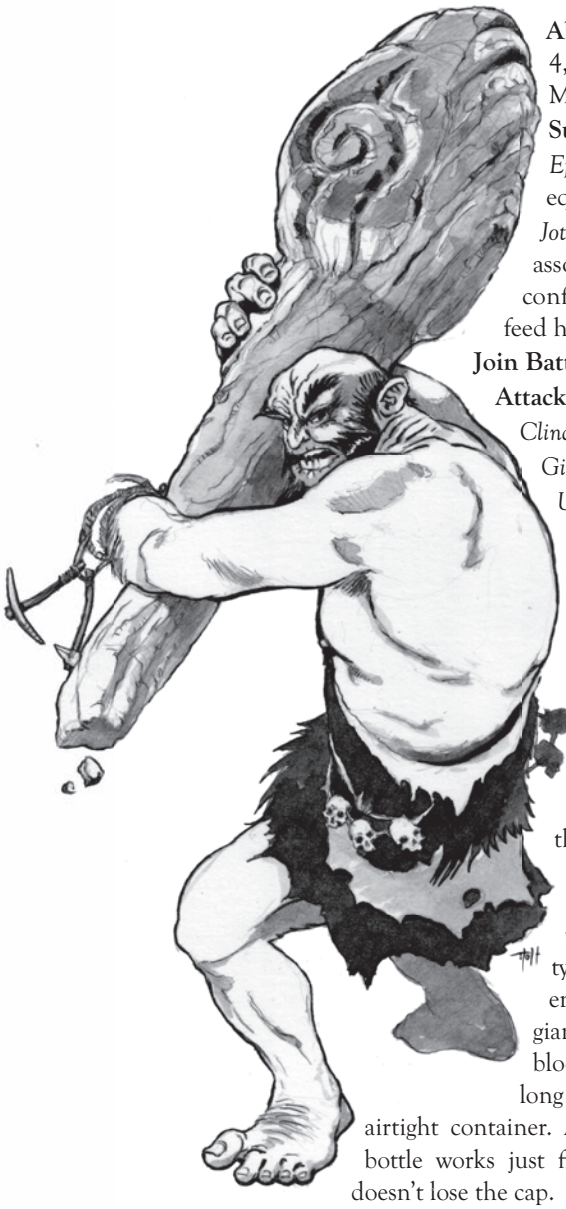
By now, cocky Scions might feel justified in assuming that giants are beneath them, that all giants are just dumb oafs that can be outsmarted if not outfought. Well, you known they say about assumptions—it makes an ass out of you and -umption. What Scions don't realize is that most of the flunky giants they've been fighting so far are just that: flunkies. Far more powerful and dangerous giants walk the World. And not only are these behemoths more powerful than the standard frost giant, they're a lot smarter, too.

The basic template for the giants described here is similar to that of the giants described in **Scion: Hero**. These giants do not suffer from the limited intelligence of those lesser giants, though. Also, each of the specimens described here typically has a much higher Legend rating than the examples from **Scion: Hero**, and consequently is even taller and stronger than its weaker kin.

GENERIC ELDER GIANT

Attributes: Strength 10, Dexterity 4, Stamina 8; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2; Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Ambition 3, Malice 3, Rapacity 2, Zealotry 3



Abilities: Animal Ken 2, Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Brawl 5, Command 4, Empathy 3, Fortitude 6, Integrity 4, Investigation 2, Marksmanship 4, Medicine 1, Melee 5, Occult 4, Politics 2, Presence 5, Thrown 4

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: All giants have Epic Strength and Epic Stamina ratings equal to (their Legend rating – 1).

Jotunblut: All elder giants, regardless of the pantheon with which they are associated, gain the equivalent of four dots in the Jotunblut Purview. To confer the benefits of Jotunblut on a mortal or an animal, the giant must feed his blood (or "eitr") to the recipient.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 9, Damage 11B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Giant Skeggox: Accuracy 10, Damage 23L, Parry DV 5, Speed 5

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 8, Damage 14B, Parry DV 4, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 10, Damage 11B, Parry DV 5, Speed 4

Soak: 20L/24B

Health Levels: -0x26/Incap

Dodge DV: 7 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 6 **Legend Points:** 36

Trophy: Unless stated otherwise, the trophy for a giant is its heart, which remains behind after death. If recovered promptly, the heart will still hold a quantity of the giant's eitr, which can be poured into any suitable receptacle. Once consumed, this eitr confers three bonus dice that can be allocated to either Strength or Stamina as the player wishes for the duration of a scene. Once the giant has been slain, his eitr no longer has any mind-altering properties, and the blood is safe for Scions to drink for its potent properties. A typical giant heart contains enough blood to supply (the giant's Legend x 3) doses. The blood will keep indefinitely as long as it is kept in a relatively airtight container. An empty three-liter soda bottle works just fine as long as the Scion doesn't lose the cap.

In addition, most elder giants come armed with unique weapons and relics that can be used as Birthright items and might also have unique magical properties.

Other Notes: A giant skeggox has the standard traits of a skeggox but is sized for a giant. Accordingly, it doubles the Damage of the standard skeggox. Its Accuracy is reduced to -2 when used by someone smaller than an elder giant.

DAIDARA-BOCCHI

Mercifully for Scions, Daidara-bocchi is a unique creature rather than a giant race. Among the most monumentally powerful creatures ever to walk the World, Daidara-Bocchi is the largest giant ever encountered who was not actually one of the Titans. A titanspawn found in Japan in ancient times, the great lumbering beast stood more than 300 feet tall. Much of Japan's current topography is considered to be the result of Daidara-bocchi, who casually rearranged rivers, lakes and even mountains, apparently out of either boredom or some strange aesthetic view. Amaterasu finally moved against him when he attempted to lift both Mount Fuji and Mount Tsukuba to see which

one was heavier and he accidentally damaged the latter by dropping it. Fortunately for both Scions (and Japanese map-makers), the Amatsukami managed to exile Daidara-bocchi to the Overworld, although Scions who explore the terrae incognitae of Japan often risk encounters with the Shatterer of Mountains.

Daidara-bocchi has a Legend rating of 8, with seven dots in Epic Strength and Epic Stamina. He has all Epic Strength and Stamina Knacks. He also has all the Boons of the Earth Purview up to the seventh dot.

GARM, LORD OF THE FENRIR

For untold millennia, the dread wolf, Garm, first-born son of the Fenris Wolf and greatest of the fenrir, stood near the entrance of Helheim, the domain of Hel and the home of the unworthy dead. A slave to the victorious Aesir after the binding of the Titans, Garm was bound in a cave near Gjallurbrú, the bridge that led into Helheim. From that vantage, Garm was commanded to slake his endless hunger on any of the poor souls who sought to leave the land of the dead. Beaten, Garm accepted this fate, taking comfort in the knowledge that he was fated to one day be freed and to take his revenge on the Aesir by slaying Tyr at Ragnarök.

Garm is unquestionably the most powerful of the fenrir. He is a black wolf (although somewhat more doglike than wolflike in appearance) who stands an incredible 20 feet tall at the shoulder. His senses are so acute that he can detect a Scion within 20 miles. Garm has all the characteristics of a typical fenrir (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 317) with the following bonuses: Intelligence +2, Strength +3, Stamina +3, Epic Strength +3, Epic Stamina +3, Epic Dexterity +3.

JOTUN

Just as the Muspel giants (see pp. 272-273) serve as the intelligent ruling class of the fire giants, so do the jotuns serve as the rulers of the frost giants of Jotunheim. The jotuns are the most intelligent of all giants, with most having some levels of Epic Intelligence and virtually all having some levels of Epic Wits. Their undisputed leader is Utgard-Loki, who is not only a towering giant standing over 60 feet tall, but also among the most accomplished practitioners of magic and illusions in all of the Overworld. His fellow jotuns almost invariably possess high levels of the Magic Purview with a wide variety of spells.

Jotuns possess the typical characteristics of the elder giant template except as follows. First, jotuns are much bigger than most giants, standing (Legend x 10) feet tall, although they can choose to shrink themselves to any size smaller than that. Second, by spending a Legend point, a jotun can cause a large quantity of liquid to freeze solid with a touch, up to a maximum of (Legend x 10,000) gallons. A jotun can also heal himself of wounds by placing the injured body parts in water and then freezing the water back onto his body to repair the damage. The giant must spend one Legend point and roll his unmodified Legend rating, regaining one health level per success.

Finally, all jotuns are gifted sorcerers, typically with dots in the Magic Purview equal to (their Legend ratings – 1) and a wide variety of spells. Jotuns are also talented illusionists. Any jotun can create a sophisticated illusion capable of fooling all of the observer's senses through the expenditure of a single Legend point. Roll the jotun's (Manipulation + Occult), adding a number of automatic successes equal to his Legend (plus automatic successes from Epic Manipulation, if any). These successes are resisted by a (Perception + Awareness + Legend) roll made on behalf of any observers. Those who fail absolutely believe in the truth of the jotun's illusion, despite any evidence to the contrary.

UTGARD—LOKI, THE LORD OF JOTUNHEIM

Utgard-Loki is the most powerful of all the jotuns and a direct offspring of the Titan Ymir. Although the jotuns as a whole are loyal to the cause of the Titans, Utgard-Loki himself is not a true believer. Having personally witnessed the destruction of a Titan, he has no illusions about the power that the Aesir can bring to bear, and he has no wish to see his people wiped from the Nine Worlds.

Accordingly, for most of his rulership, he has pursued a curious détente with the Aesir, most notably when Thor, Loki and Thialfi dared to enter Jotunheim. Utgard-Loki ignored numerous opportunities to slay the son of Odin, opting instead to humiliate the Thunder God and his allies with a series of challenges, all of which were made impossible by Utgard-Loki's peerless skill with illusions. Thor was directed to wrestle an old woman who was actually Old Age, who no one can defeat. Loki was defeated in an eating contest by Fire itself. Thialfi was beaten in a footrace by what turned out to be Thought incarnate.

Even now that the Titans are free, Utgard-Loki refuses to throw the full weight of the jotuns behind their cause. While he despises the Aesir for the death of his father, Utgard-Loki is acutely aware of the fact that he has no patron among the Titans, even as his kingdom sits at the very edge of Asgard. Worse, the only Titan even remotely likely to feel kinship with his people is Surtur, whose chief goal is the destruction of all that is... Jotunheim included. Accordingly, Utgard-Loki plays his cards close to his enormous breast, directing some of his jotun minions to aid the other titanspawn, while secretly commanding others to quietly subvert those who would aid the more destructive of the Titans.

He draws the line at overtly aiding the Gods, however. While he is unwilling to provoke the Aesir into open warfare, he takes perverse pleasure in humiliating their Scions at every opportunity, even as he once did with their sires.

Attributes: Strength 20, Dexterity 4, Stamina 10; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2; Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Ambition 3, Malice 3, Rapacity 2, Zealotry 3

Abilities: Animal Ken 2, Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Command 5, Empathy 3, Fortitude 6, Integrity 5, Investigation 4, Medicine 1, Melee 5, Occult 5, Politics 4, Presence 5, Thrown 4

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Army of One, Battle Cry, Battle Map, Blessing of Bravery, Colossus Armor, Jotunblut 4, Magic 7, Morale Failure, Warrior Ideal (Barbarian Warlord)

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 7 (All Knacks in this book and in **Scion: Hero**), Epic Stamina 7 (All Knacks in this book and in **Scion: Hero**), Epic Manipulation 3 (Gods' Honest, Hard Sell, Overt Order), Epic Intelligence 3 (Know-It-All, Language Mastery, Perfect Memory), Epic Wits 3 (Instant Assessment, Rabbit Reflexes, Social Chameleon)

Ice Mastery: For one Legend point, Utgard-Loki can cause a large quantity of liquid to freeze solid with a touch, up to a maximum of (Legend x 10,000) gallons. Also for one Legend, he can also heal himself of wounds by placing the injured body parts in water and freezing the water back onto his body to repair the damage. Roll his unmodified Legend rating for him to do so. He regains one health level per success.

Illusion: With the expenditure of a single Legend point, Utgard-Loki can create a sophisticated illusion capable of fooling all of an observer's senses. Roll Utgard-Loki's (Manipulation + Occult), adding a number of automatic successes equal to his Legend (plus automatic successes from Epic Manipulation). These successes are resisted by a (Perception + Awareness + Legend) roll made on behalf of any observers. Those who fail absolutely believe in the truth of the illusion, despite any evidence to the contrary.

Spells: Utgard-Loki possesses all the spells in this book and in **Scion: Hero**.

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 9, Damage 21L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Giant Skeggox: Accuracy 10, Damage 33L, Parry DV 5, Speed 5

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 8, Damage 24L, Parry DV 4, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 10, Damage 21L, Parry DV 5, Speed 4

Soak: 7A/27L/32B

Health Levels: -0x37/Incap

Dodge DV: 8 **Willpower:** 8

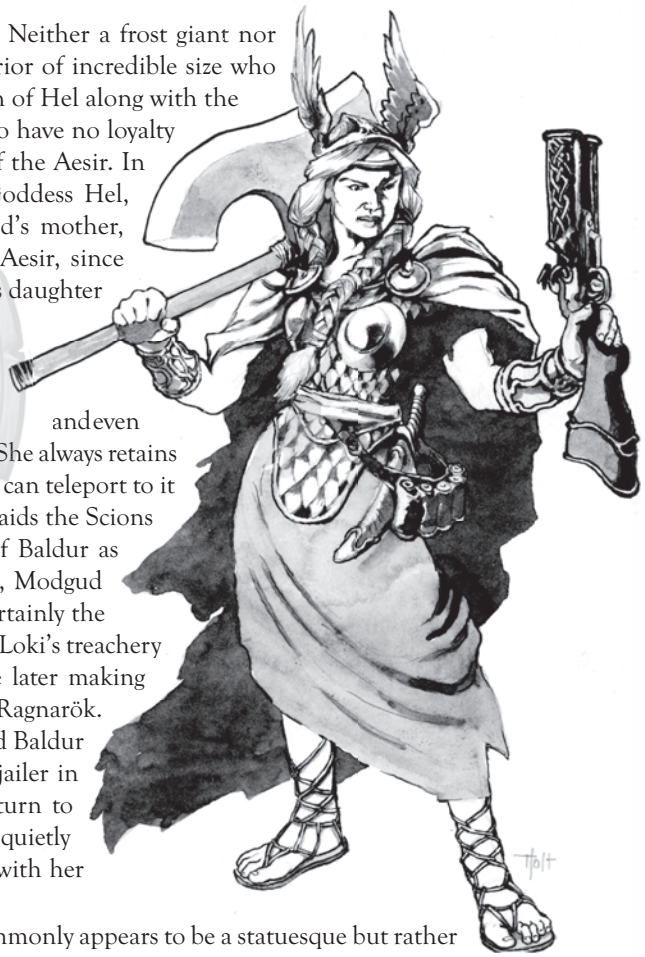
Legend: 8 **Legend Points:** 64

Trophy: Unless stated otherwise, the trophy for a giant is its heart, which remains behind after death. If recovered promptly, the heart will still hold a quantity of the giant's eitr, which can be poured into any suitable receptacle. Once consumed, this eitr confers three bonus dice that can be allocated to either Strength or Stamina as the player wishes for the duration of a scene. Once the giant has been slain, his eitr no longer has any mind-altering properties, and the blood is safe for Scions to drink for its potent properties. A typical giant heart contains enough blood to supply (the giant's Legend x 3) doses. The blood will keep indefinitely

as long as it is kept in a relatively airtight container. An empty three-liter soda bottle works just fine as long as the Scion doesn't lose the cap.

Other Notes: A giant skeggox has the standard traits of a skeggox but is sized for a giant. Accordingly, it doubles the Damage of the standard skeggox. Its Accuracy is reduced to -2 when used by someone smaller than an elder giant.

MODGUD



Modgud is an anomaly among the Norse giants. Neither a frost giant nor a fire giant, Modgud appears simply as a female warrior of incredible size who guards the bridge Gjallurbrú that leads to the domain of Hel along with the wolf Garm. Unlike Garm, however, Modgud seems to have no loyalty to the Titans and is at least nominally a supporter of the Aesir. In fact, Modgud's chief loyalty is to her patron, the Goddess Hel, who, depending on which Aesir you ask, is Modgud's mother, lover or both. This fact is hardly reassuring to the Aesir, since none of them is certain which side of the battle Loki's daughter is on. Modgud herself is silent on that score.

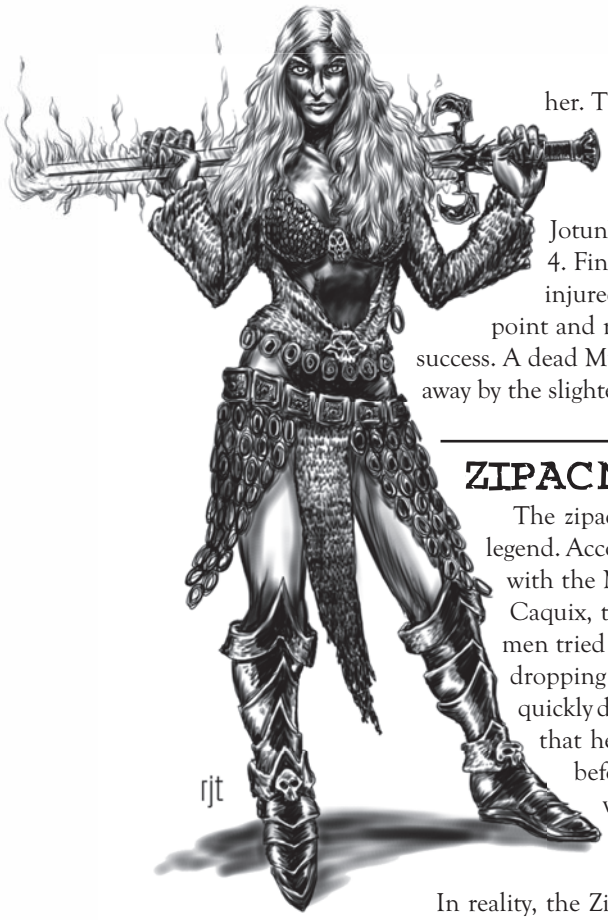
Although the Nordic tales say that Modgud always stands guard at Gjallurbrú, this is not the case. Rather, the giantess spends much of her time among the Aesir and even on Midgard, acting as liaison with Hel's earthly Scions. She always retains an instinctive awareness of Gjallurbrú's status, and she can teleport to it instantly with but a thought. Modgud also sometimes aids the Scions of Loki from time to time, and surprisingly, those of Baldur as well. While Hel herself has no love for God of Light, Modgud is far less immune to his radiance. The kindest and certainly the most charming of all Aesir, Baldur is destined to fall to Loki's treachery and eventually become a resident of Helheim before later making his triumphant return to the realm of the living after Ragnarök. Both Baldur and Modgud are aware of this destiny, and Baldur has taken the preemptive step of seducing his future jailer in order to lay the groundwork for his post-mortem return to glory. Utterly smitten with the God of Light, Modgud quietly aids Baldur's Scions when doing so does not conflict with her duties to Hel.

When encountered in Midgard, Modgud most commonly appears to be a statuesque but rather plain woman (usually over six-feet-tall) who favors black clothing, usually black motorcycle leathers. When she assumes her true form, Modgud has all the attributes of an elder giant with a Legend rating of 7. She also possesses all the Boons associated with the Death, Guardian and Psychopomp Purviews up through the fifth dot. Her preferred weapons are her firearm "Dragon's Breath," a sawed-off, double-barreled elephant gun that inflicts aggravated damage (Accuracy +0, Damage +8A, Range 75), and "Limb-Splitter," a double-bladed skeggox she carries over her shoulder (as **Scion: Hero**, p. 202, but dealing double damage because of its size—a non-elder-giant wielder would find it has Accuracy -2 as a result of the size disparity).

MUSPEL GIANT

While the standard fire giants are fully described on pages 315–316 of **Scion: Hero**, Muspelheim itself is ruled by a superior breed. Since Surtur's imprisonment, his queen, Sinmore, has acted as regent over his affairs. Blessed directly by Surtur's ichor, Sinmore has created an entire brood of exceptionally powerful fire giants—the Muspel giants.

The powers of a Muspel giant are the same as those of the standard fire giant, adjusted for the superior Legend ratings and Intelligence of the Muspel giants. First, all Muspel giants have an Appearance of 1 due to their crispy exterior. Second, all Muspel giants have the Boons of the Fire Purview to a level equal to (their Legend ratings – 1). Furthermore, by spending a Legend point, a Muspel giant can cause the corona of fire around her body to ignite any flammable thing she touches. Doing so adds (Legend x 2) lethal damage to any physical attacks she makes, and inflicts (Legend x 2) dice of lethal damage to anyone who makes a successful brawling attack against



her. This effect lasts for one scene. Unlike standard fire giants, however, Muspel giants can spend an additional Legend point to expand this corona of fire, inflicting (Legend x 2) dice of lethal damage on everyone within (Legend) yards. Muspel giants also possess Jotunblut ratings equal to (Legend – 1) instead of the normal rating of 4. Finally, a Muspel giant can also heal herself of wounds by placing the injured body parts in burning flames. The giant must spend one Legend point and roll her unmodified Legend rating, regaining one health level per success. A dead Muspel giant transforms into fine ash soon after death, to be blown away by the slightest breeze.

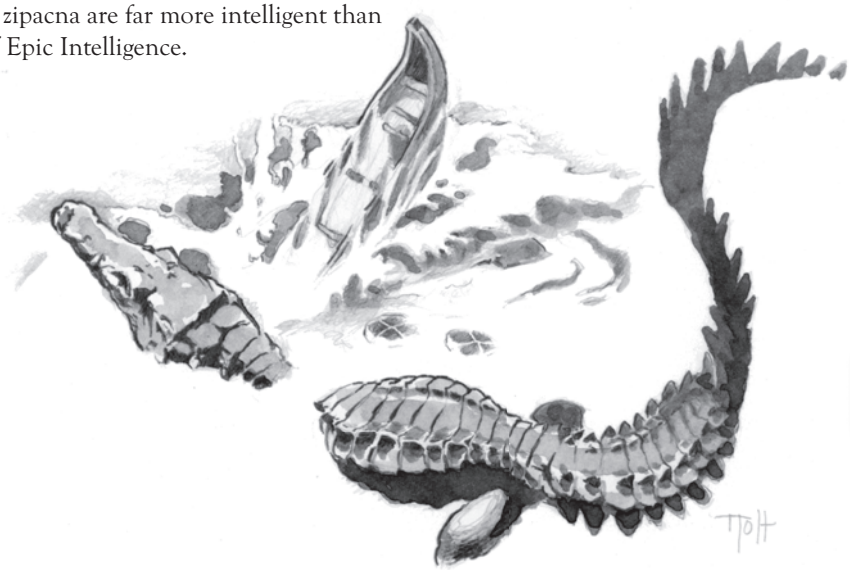
ZIPACNA

The zipacna are a race of highly intelligent giants associated with Mayan legend. According to the *Popol Vuh*, the chief surviving religious text associated with the Mayan civilization, Zipacna was a demon giant and son of Vucub Caquix, the lord of the Underworld kingdom of Xibalba. A group of 400 men tried unsuccessfully to kill Zipacna by tricking him into a pit and then dropping huge rocks and trees on him. However, Zipacna was cunning. He quickly dug a side passage and hid in the earth, leading the 400 into thinking that he was dead. Then, he waited until they were deep in celebration before he burst from the earth and killed them all. Eventually, Zipacna was slain by the Mayan Scion twins, Hun-Ahpu and Ixbalanque, who took advantage of the demon's limitless hunger to lead him into a trap.

In reality, the Zipacna of legend was only one of a race of giants that served the Titans and fought against the Gods of Mesoamerica. The zipacna were as strong as any giant but were also more intelligent than most and also gifted with the power to assume the characteristics of a caiman (a type of South American alligator).

Other than the fact that a typical specimen is over 30 feet tall, a zipacna looks almost exactly like a normal human being. When a zipacna chooses to assume her caiman form, however, she is clearly inhuman to any observer. Astute observers can also identify zipacna by their eyes, which appear reptilian. Zipacna can be male or female and breed normally. Females do not give birth to live young, but instead lay a clutch of eggs. These eggs will hatch into caiman, which will then begin trying to devour one another. The strongest offspring will kill and eat its siblings and then quickly grow into an adult zipacna within just a few seconds.

Zipacna possess the typical characteristics of giants except as follows. First, zipacna gain +2 Epic Strength over the normal elder giant template. Second, by spending one Legend point, a zipacna can transform his skin into a tough alligator-like hide, gaining +10L/+10B soak for the duration of a scene. Doing so automatically reduces the zipacna's Appearance to 0. Finally, zipacna are far more intelligent than most giants and possess one dot of Epic Intelligence.



MINIONS

Minions are servitor races created by the Titans to advance their earthly interests. Some minions are "evolved" from human beings, and others, like the bakeneko, are fashioned from animals but given human intellect, but most are born from the Titans directly.

AMANOJAKU

According to Japanese folklore, amanojaku were trickster demons, spirits of perversity that toyed with their mortal victims, crushing their hopes and destroying whatever the victims loved most. The amanojaku were adept at doing so, as they were blessed with powers of telepathy, mental suggestion and even shapeshifting.

In truth, amanojaku are a breed of titanspawn minion fashioned by Mikaboshi himself. To create this vile creature, Mikaboshi twisted the forms of evil mortals and then fused them with ichor provided by Ama no Zako, a Scion of Susano-o who had been elevated to godhood only to be seduced by Mikaboshi's dark glory. The resulting amanojaku are twisted, manipulative things.

In their true form, amanojaku are stunted dwarf-like creatures with red skin, tusks and a single horn in the center of their foreheads. However, they are talented shapeshifters, and can assume the form of any mortal indefinitely with the expenditure of a single Legend point. Amanojaku are also telepathic, able to read the minds of any mortal or Scion they encounter.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance (varies; 0 in true form); Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Ambition 3, Malice 3, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Academics 3, Animal Ken 1, Art (Any One) 1, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Command 3, Control (Automobile) 1, Craft (Any One) 1, Empathy 4, Fortitude 5, Integrity 5, Investigation 1, Larceny 4, Marksmanship 2, Medicine 1, Melee 4, Occult 4, Politics 1, Presence 4, Science (Any One) 1, Stealth 3, Survival 1, Thrown 1

Supernatural Powers:

Shapeshifting: An amanojaku can assume the form of any mortal by spending a Legend point. The amanojaku can reflexively return to his true form without cost, but otherwise, he can remain in his stolen form indefinitely. Physically, the amanojaku is a perfect copy of the mortal, although he doesn't have the mortal's memories or knowledge. Generally, an amanojaku cannot be identified merely through questioning, since amanojaku are also telepathic, but a clever Scion can identify the imposter by asking him to perform some technical task (reading an ancient language, fixing a carburetor, etc.) that would be easy for the real person.

Suggestion: An amanojaku can suggest a course of action to a mortal or Scion and compel the victim to follow it. Roll the amanojaku's (Manipulation + Command + Legend). To succeed, the roll must garner more successes than the target's opposed (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll. This power automatically fails if the amanojaku attempts to use it against a target with a higher Legend rating than himself or if he attempts to use it to compel a suicidal course of action. In practice, however, amanojaku rarely attempt to use this power to directly kill their enemies. They usually opt to humiliate their prey instead and force them to violate their own moral codes.

Telepathy: An amanojaku can reflexively read the thoughts of anyone he encounters by rolling (Perception + Awareness + Legend), resisted by a roll of (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). An amanojaku's telepathy automatically fails against targets whose Legend ratings exceed his own.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 7, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 6, Damage 7B, Parry DV 3, Speed 5

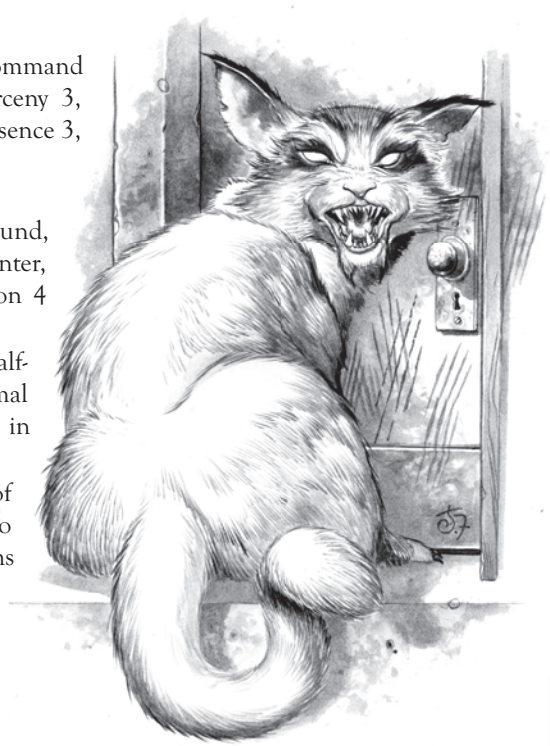
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 8, Damage 4B, Parry DV 4, Speed 4
Soak: 2L/3B
Health Levels: -0/-0/-0/-1/-1/–1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap
Dodge DV: 6 **Willpower:** 6
Legend: 5 **Legend Points:** 25
Trophy: The horn of an amanojaku can be ground up into a powder that, when brewed into an herbal tea and consumed, grants the drinker the gift of telepathy for a scene. This telepathy has all same limitations as it does for the amanojaku himself, but it also requires the expenditure of a Legend point for a scene of use. A typical amanojaku horn yields enough powder for 10 uses. The powder also tastes so foul that a Scion's player must succeed on a (Stamina + Resistance) roll at difficulty 2 for the character to drink the mixture and keep it down.
Other Notes: None

BAKENEKO

A frightening demon of Japanese myth, the bakeneko begins life as a simple house cat that grows and continues to grow until it is large enough to stalk and kill its master and assume his identity, thereafter living life as a human until its identity is discovered. The first bakeneko were created as assassins and infiltrators for use against the Amatsukami. The typical bakeneko's true form is that of an enormous housecat about the size of a large lion. Each bakeneko, however, can assume the form of anyone whose heart she has eaten. A bakeneko wearing a human disguise only gains the appearance of her victim. She gains none of the victim's memories or skills, and those close the victim will almost certainly notice a change in personality. The creature can also take the form of other animals whose hearts it devours, but it prefers to wear that of a human being. Finally, a bakeneko that has stolen the form of any human being gains the power to assume the form of a hybrid cat-person form, which looks like a powerfully built humanoid cat.

A bakeneko that has devoured the hearts of one or more Scions can evolve into a more powerful type of creature called a nekomata (see pp. 279-280).

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 5, Stamina 6; Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 4; Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4
Virtues: Ambition 1, Malice 3, Rapacity 2, Zealotry 2
Abilities: Animal Ken 1, Athletics 5, Awareness 4, Brawl 4, Command 1, Empathy 3, Fortitude 3, Integrity 2, Investigation 4, Larceny 3, Marksmanship 4, Medicine 1, Melee 2, Occult 3, Politics 1, Presence 3, Stealth 5, Survival 1
Supernatural Powers:
Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 3 (Crushing Grip, Holy Bound, Uplifting Might), Epic Dexterity 4 (Cat's Grace, Lightning Sprinter, Monkey Climber, Untouchable Opponent), Epic Manipulation 4 (Blurt It Out, Overt Order, Gods' Honest, Hard Sell)
Hybrid Form: The bakeneko can transform into a half-man/half-cat creature. In this form, the bakeneko keeps all of its normal Attributes and Abilities, but gains +2 to his Strength and +1 in Epic Strength. He also gains claws that inflict +2L damage.
Shapeshifting: The bakeneko can assume the physical form of anyone whose heart she has eaten at no cost. The bakeneko never gains any knowledge or Abilities from those whose forms she steals.



Join Battle: 8
Attacks:
Cat Form
Bite: Accuracy 8, Damage 12L, Parry DV —, Speed 5
Claw: Accuracy 10, Damage 9L, Parry DV 12, Speed 4
Human (and Hybrid) Form
Clinch: Accuracy 9, Damage 7L (9L in hybrid form), Parry DV —, Speed 6, P
Katana: Accuracy 8, Damage 12L (14L in hybrid form), Parry DV 11, Speed 5
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 8, Damage 10B (14L in hybrid form), Parry DV 11, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 10, Damage 7B (11L in hybrid form), Parry DV 12, Speed 4
Daikyu: Accuracy 9, Damage 10L, Range 40, Speed 6
Soak: 3L/6B
Health Levels: -0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap
Dodge DV: 15 **Willpower:** 5
Legend: 5 **Legend Points:** 25
Trophy: After the bakeneko is destroyed, it reverts to the form of a house cat. The cat's ears, if removed and placed in a small leather pouch, will twitch violently when in the presence of anyone who has been shapeshifted, thereby giving the Scion possible warning of treachery.
Other Notes: None

DAI—TENGU

Many Scions have encountered the tengu, strange bird-man masters of the martial arts (see **Scion: Hero**, pp. 323–324). As a karasu-tengu ages and grows in power, it evolves into the more powerful and human-looking dai-tengu. The dai-tengu appear virtually human save for their red-skin and long, beak-like noses, and while they still have wings, they can magically cause them to disappear when not needed. Dai-tengu also gain the power to weave convincing illusions, and those who are allied with the Gods sometimes accept Scions as martial-arts students. Currently, there is conflict among the elders of the dai-tengu, with one faction seeking to aid and advise the Scions while others are ruthless servants of the Titans.

Dai-tengu possess the same traits as karasu-tengu, with the following additions:

Epic Attributes: Epic Dexterity 3 (Lightning Sprinter, Untouchable Opponent, Whirlwind Shield)

Forge Birthright: Dai-tengu are a master craftsmen of Birthright artifact weapons. A dai-tengu can fashion any sort of relic weapon after a few days of work provided that he has some amount of legendary material with which to work, but most dai-tengu are traditionalists and prefer to work with swords. Forging a Birthright requires an expenditure of one Legend point.

Illusion: A dai-tengu can weave sophisticated illusions that affect the senses of everyone nearby. Roll the tengu's (Intelligence + Craft + Legend) versus a roll of the victims' (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). Any character whose player gained fewer successes believes that the scene is exactly as the tengu imagines it. Unaffected targets perceive the illusion as a sort of hazy mirage that can never be mistaken for reality. Illusions are not real in any sense, so, for instance, an affected person cannot walk over an illusionary bridge. Likewise, an illusionary attack cannot harm a target, although a target could easily fall into a pit covered by an illusionary floor. Most dai-tengu use their illusion powers to manipulate their victims into taking some course of action rather than attempting to harm them directly.

Mystic Sensei: A dai-tengu is not only a peerless martial artist, he is also an excellent teacher. While studying under a dai-tengu, any martial-arts student (Scion or otherwise) reduces the experience cost for the following Abilities by one point per dot: Brawl, Dodge, Melee and Stealth.

Trophy: The trophy of a dai-tengu is a stylized red-faced tengu mask which is all that remains of the creature's body. This mask, when worn in combat, adds 3 to all martial arts-related rolls.

SÔJÔBÔ

King of the Tengu (Guide ••••)

The undisputed king of the tengu (at the moment, at least) is Sôjôbô. An ancient hermit, Sôjôbô has long, white hair, bright red skin and the long, beaklike nose common to all tengu. A peerless martial artist and master shapeshifter, Sôjôbô also carries a magical fan that allows him to control the weather. Legends also say that Sôjôbô has the strength of a thousand tengu. Whether that's true or not, his Scion students all agree that he is among the strongest beings they have ever encountered. Sôjôbô currently resides at a monastery near the base of Mt. Kurama in Japan, where he trains Scions in the combat arts. To say that he is a harsh taskmaster is an understatement, but his students are among the deadliest warriors among Scions.

By far the oldest of all tengu, Sôjôbô suspects that he is near the end of his natural life span. He fears that he won't live to see the final battle against the Titans, the one for which he has waited almost his entire life. He is aware that Taimatsu-Maru plots his death, but he refuses to waste his time worrying about his own demise when he has Scion students to prepare for the greatest battle in history.

Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 7, Stamina 7; Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 4; Perception 6, Intelligence 5, Wits 7
Virtues: Duty 4, Endurance 4, Intellect 4, Valor 5

Abilities: Academics 5, Animal Ken 2, Art (Calligraphy) 1, Athletics 8, Awareness 5, Brawl 8, Command 5, Empathy 4, Fortitude 4, Integrity 6, Investigation 3, Marksmanship 6, Medicine 5, Melee 8, Occult 4, Politics 2, Presence 5, Science 1, Stealth 5, Survival 3, Thrown 5

Supernatural Powers:

Befuddle: Sôjôbô can manipulate a mortal's short-term memory or even cause limited amnesia. Doing so requires a (Manipulation + Command + Legend) roll contested against the victim's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll. For every success Sôjôbô's roll gets in excess of the victim's roll, the tengu may alter up to one hour of the victim's memory. This power automatically fails if Sôjôbô attempts to use it against a target with a higher Legend rating than himself.

Boons: All Boons of the Sky Purview from this book and **Scion: Hero**. Sôjôbô channels these Boons through his magical fan.

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 7 (All Knacks from this book and **Scion: Hero**), Epic Dexterity 7 (All Knacks from this book and **Scion: Hero**), Epic Stamina 7 (All Knacks from this book and **Scion: Hero**)

Flight: All tengu can fly at five times their normal movement rates, applying the normal DV penalties for Move and Dash actions in combat. Out of combat, a tengu can fly at about 40 miles per hour.

Forge Birthright: All dai-tengu are master craftsmen of Birthright relic weapons. Sôjôbô can fashion any sort of relic weapon after a few days of work provided that he has some amount of legendary material with which to work, but like most dai-tengu he prefers to craft swords. Forging a Birthright requires the expenditure of one Legend point.

Illusion: Sôjôbô can weave sophisticated illusions that affect the senses of everyone nearby. Roll the tengu's (Intelligence + Craft + Legend) versus a roll of the victims' (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). Any character whose player gained fewer successes believes that the scene is exactly as Sôjôbô imagines it. Unaffected targets perceive the illusion as a sort of hazy mirage that can never be mistaken for reality.

Mystic Sensei: Sôjôbô is not only a peerless martial artist, he's also an excellent teacher. While studying under Sôjôbô, any martial-arts student (Scion or otherwise) reduces the experience cost for the following Abilities by one point per dot: Athletics, Brawl, Melee and Stealth.

Shapeshifting: Sôjôbô can assume the form of any mortal or animal for the duration of one scene by spending a Legend point. Sôjôbô can never perfectly copy a specific individual, but he can appear as any type of normal human. Sôjôbô can assume the form of any animal from the size of a housecat to that of a bull.

Superlative Martial Arts: Sôjôbô automatically adds his Legend rating as an Accuracy bonus on all Brawl and Melee attacks. Sôjôbô can actually teach this power to any Scion with at least a Legend rating of 6, an Epic Dexterity of 5 and Brawl 5. A Scion can learn this power at a cost of 12 experience points. Sôjôbô will not consider teaching this power to a Scion unless A.) Sôjôbô serves as the Scion's guide and B.) he is supremely confident in the Scion's spiritual awareness.

Join Battle: 12

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 23, Damage 9L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Daikyu: Accuracy 17, Damage 14L, Range 80, Speed 5

Katana: Accuracy 26, Damage 15L, Parry DV 31, Speed 4

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 22, Damage 12L, Parry DV 29, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 24, Damage 9L, Parry DV 30, Speed 4

Wakizashi: Accuracy 26, Damage 12L, Parry DV 31, Speed 4

Soak: 7A/26L/29B

Health Levels: -0x31/Incap

Dodge DV: 34 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 8 **Legend Points:** 64

Trophy: In addition to the usual mask, Sôjôbô's magical fan is his special trophy. It can serve as a Birthright relic for any Boons of the Sky Purview. His relic katana, wakizashi and daikyu would also make fine prizes.

Other Notes: Sôjôbô's daikyu has the following traits: Accuracy +4, Damage +5L, Range 80, Speed 5. His katana has the following traits: Accuracy +3, Damage +6L, Defense +2, Speed 4. His wakizashi has the following traits: Accuracy +3, Damage +3L, Defense +2, Speed 4. When using both his katana and his wakizashi, Sôjôbô can freely make two attacks at no penalty, and he gains an additional +3 to his Parry DV. Only a character with the Superlative Martial Arts supernatural power can gain this benefit.

TAIMATSU—MARU

Not all of the tengu abandoned their loyalty to the Titans that created them. A great many serve the Titans still, and many wish to see their brethren returned to the Titans' fold. One such tengu is Sôjôbô's chief rival, Taimatsu-Maru, a dai-tengu empowered by the Titans who wishes to return all tengu to the Titans' service—in chains, if necessary. An ancient and formidable tengu, Taimatsu-Maru would approach the aging Sôjôbô in power if not wisdom even without a direct grant of titanic power. With the additional benefits of his masters' largesse, including flowing robes that grant him dominion over flames, Taimatsu-Maru is a danger to all but the most skilled tengu. And if his fighting skills weren't enough, the dai-tengu is also a social monster, capable of psychically controlling any tengu he encounters whose Legend rating is less than his own. Already, dozens of tengu formerly loyal to Sôjôbô have been turned to the Titans' cause, but Taimatsu-Maru won't be satisfied until he has found Sôjôbô himself and sucked the marrow from the old fool's bones.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 6, Stamina 6; Charisma 5, Manipulation 6, Appearance 4; Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

Virtues: Ambition 5, Malice 4, Rapacity 1, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Academics 2, Animal Ken 2, Athletics 5, Awareness 4, Brawl 6, Command 5, Empathy 2, Fortitude 4, Integrity 3, Marksmanship 6, Medicine 3, Melee 6, Occult 4, Politics 2, Presence 4, Stealth 3, Survival 1, Thrown 4

Supernatural Powers:

Befuddle: Taimatsu-Maru can manipulate a mortal's short-term memory or even cause limited amnesia. Doing so requires a (Manipulation + Command + Legend) roll contested against the victim's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll. For every success the roll for Taimatsu-Maru gets in excess of the victim's roll, the tengu may alter up to one hour of the victim's memory. This power automatically fails if Taimatsu-Maru attempts to use it against a target with a higher Legend rating than himself.

Boons: All Boons from the Fire Purview found in this book and **Scion: Hero**. These Boons are channeled through Taimatsu-Maru's enchanted robes.

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 5 (All Knacks from this book and **Scion: Hero**), Epic Dexterity 6 (All Knacks from this book and **Scion: Hero**), Epic Stamina 5 (All Knacks from this book and **Scion: Hero**)

Flight: All tengu can fly at five times their normal movement rates, applying the normal DV penalties for Move and Dash actions in combat. Out of combat, a tengu can fly at about 40 miles per hour.

Forge Birthright: All dai-tengu are a master craftsmen of Birthright relic weapons. Taimatsu-Maru can fashion any sort of relic weapon after a few days of work provided that he has some amount of legendary material with which to work, but like most dai-tengu he prefers to craft swords. Forging a Birthright requires the expenditure of one Legend point.

Illusion: Taimatsu-Maru can weave sophisticated illusions that affect the senses of everyone nearby. Roll the tengu's (Intelligence + Craft + Legend) versus a roll of the victims' (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). Any character whose player gained fewer successes believes that the scene is exactly as Taimatsu-Maru imagines Unaffected targets perceive the illusion as a sort of hazy mirage that can never be mistaken for reality.

Mystic Sensei: Taimatsu-Maru is not only a peerless martial artist, he is also an excellent teacher. While studying under Taimatsu-Maru, any martial-arts student reduces the experience cost for the following Abilities by one point per dot: Athletics, Brawl, Melee and Stealth.

Shapeshifting: Taimatsu-Maru can assume the form of any mortal or animal for the duration of one scene by spending a Legend point. Taimatsu-Maru can never perfectly copy a specific individual, but he can appear as any type of normal human. Taimatsu-Maru can assume the form of any animal from the size of a housecat to that of a bull.

Superlative Martial Arts: Taimatsu-Maru automatically adds his Legend rating as an Accuracy bonus on all Brawl and Melee attacks. While Taimatsu-Maru can theoretically teach this power to Scions, he would choose death over ever doing so.

Honeyed Lies: Taimatsu-Maru can issue lies that other tengu (and, fortunately, *only* tengu) are compelled to accept as true. This powerful titanspawn gift has allowed him to turn a significant portion of the independent tengu back to the service of the Titans, while forcing others who are afraid to face him into hiding. There is no mechanic for this power, which only affects other Storyteller characters and which exists as a Storytelling device (such as using Taimatsu-Maru to alter the loyalty of a tengu who had been mentoring a player's character).

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 20, Damage 7L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Katana: Accuracy 22, Damage 12L, Parry DV 23, Speed 4

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 19, Damage 10L, Parry DV 21, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 21, Damage 7L, Parry DV 23, Speed 4

Wakizashi: Accuracy 23, Damage 9L, Parry DV 23, Speed 4

Daikyu: Accuracy 15, Damage 10L, Range 80, Speed 5

Soak: 5A/14L/17B

Health Levels: -0x20/Incap

Dodge DV: 26 **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 8 **Legend Points:** 64

Trophy: Beyond the mask trophy all dai-tengu provide, Taimatsu-Maru's martial arts robes of scarlet satin are the source of his fire-based powers and can serve as a Birthright item for the Fire Purview. His relic katana, wakizashi and daikyu would also make fine prizes.

Other Notes: Taimatsu-Maru's daikyu has the following traits: Accuracy +3, Damage +3L, Range 80, Speed 5. His katana has the following traits: Accuracy +2, Damage +5L, Defense +2, Speed 4. His wakizashi has the following traits: Accuracy + 3, Damage +2L, Defense +2, Speed 4. When using both his katana and his wakizashi, Taimatsu-Maru can freely make double attacks at no penalty and he gains an additional +2 to his Parry DV. Only a character with the Superlative Martial Arts supernatural power can gain this benefit.

NEKOMATA

A nekomata is the more powerful cousin of the bakeneko (see pp. 275-276). When a bakeneko has consumed the heart of a Scion, she evolves into a nekomata. She retains all the powers of her previous bakeneko form, but becomes much more physically powerful. She also gains powerful necromantic powers that allow her to manipulate the dead. In her cat form, she still appears to be a house cat, but she is approximately twice the size of a lion. Nekomata possess multiple tails, and a nekomata gains a new tail every time she devours another Scion's heart. A nekomata can also fly in her cat-form.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 5, Stamina 6; Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 4; Perception 5, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Ambition 2, Malice 2, Rapacity 4, Zealotry 1

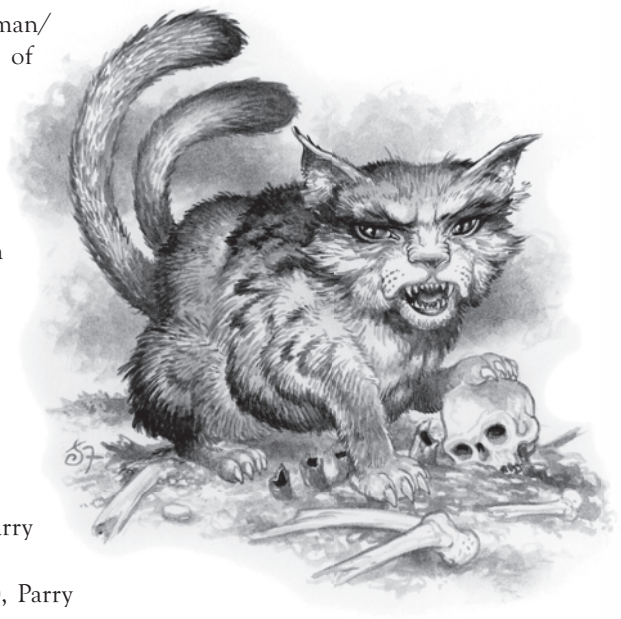
Abilities: Academics 2, Animal Ken 3, Athletics 6, Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Command 3, Empathy 4, Fortitude 4, Integrity 4, Investigation 4, Larceny 4, Medicine 1, Melee 3, Occult 3, Politics 1, Presence 4, Stealth 6, Survival 4, Thrown 1

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Unquiet Corpse

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 4 (Crushing Grip, Holy Bound, Holy Rampage, Uplifting Might), Epic Dexterity 4 (Cat's Grace, Lightning Sprinter, Monkey Climber, Untouchable Opponent), Epic Stamina 4 (Damage Conversion, Regeneration, Self-Healing, Solipsistic Well-Being)

Flight: The nekomata can fly in its cat-form at speeds of up to 100 miles per hour.



Hybrid Form: The nekomata can transform into a half-man/half-cat creature. In this form, the nekomata keeps all of its normal Attributes and Abilities, but gains +2 to his Strength and +1 in Epic Strength. He also gains claws that inflict +2L damage.

Shapeshifting: The nekomata can assume at no cost the physical form of anyone whose heart she has eaten. The nekomata never gains any knowledge or Abilities from those whose forms she steals.

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Cat Form

Bite: Accuracy 8, Damage 12L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Claw: Accuracy 10, Damage 9L, Parry DV 12, Speed 4

Human (and Hybrid) Form

Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 7L (11L in hybrid form), Parry DV —, Speed 6

Katana: Accuracy 9, Damage 12L (14L in hybrid form), Parry DV 12, Speed 5

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 10B (14L in hybrid form), Parry DV 11, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 7B (11L in hybrid form), Parry DV 13, Speed 4

Soak: 4A/10L/13B

Health Levels: -0x17/Incap

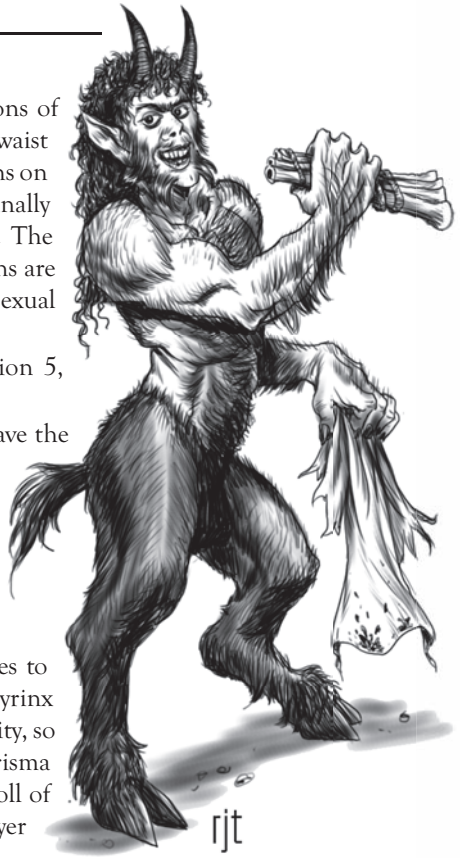
Dodge DV: 16 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 6 **Legend Points:** 36

Trophy: The trophy of a nekomata, like that of the bakeneko, is in its ears. In addition to detecting the presence of shapeshifted beings, however, a pouch containing nekomata ears can also serve as a Birthright relic for Boons of the Death Purview.

Other Notes: None

SATYR



Like their creator, the fallen God Pan, satyrs are curious amalgamations of goats and human beings. Each satyr appears to be a human male from the waist up, but has the hindquarters of a large goat. A satyr also has a set of goat horns on his head, the size of which increases with his Legend rating. Although originally created by a God, satyrs are considered a titanspawn minion race today. The carefree, playful fauns of Greek mythology are long extinct. All that remains are twisted and lecherous mockeries with the power to instill overpowering sexual urges with a single note of their pan pipes.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5; Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 2; Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Virtues: Ambition 1, Malice 3, Rapacity 5, Zealotry 3. A few satyrs still have the Virtues associated with the Dodekatheon, but they are a small minority.

Abilities: Academics 1, Animal Ken 2, Art (Music) 5, Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Command 1, Control 1, Craft (Pipes) 1, Empathy 5, Fortitude 5, Integrity 1, Larceny 2, Melee 3, Occult 2, Presence 3, Survival 2, Thrown 3

Supernatural Powers:

Bacchanalia: All satyrs can fill those around them with overpowering urges to party uncontrollably. In order to activate this power, the satyr must play his syrinx where those to be affected can hear it. As the satyr's tune increases in intensity, so do any affected revelers descend farther into depravity. Roll the satyr's (Charisma + Art [Music]), adding his Legend rating in automatic successes, versus a roll of the victims' (Willpower + Integrity + Legend). Any character whose player

gained fewer successes is affected and, depending on the situation, will begin drinking heavily, partaking in drugs or simply having wild sex (even in a public place), losing all social inhibitions.

Boons: Assess Health, Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty, Heal/Infect

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 3 (Crushing Grip, Hurl to the Horizon, Knockback Attack), Epic Charisma 1 (Pied Piper)

Tough Hide: The hirsute hide of a satyr is strong and tough, adding five bashing and lethal soak.

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 6L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 9B, Parry DV 4, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 6B, Parry DV 6, Speed 4

Xiphos: Accuracy 9, Damage 9L, Parry DV 5, Speed 4

Pilum: Accuracy 8, Damage 8L, Range 10, Speed 6, P

Soak: 8L/10B

Health Levels: -0/-0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 7 **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 4 **Legend Points:** 16

Trophy: The trophy of a satyr is his syrinx, which can be used as a Birthright item for any Health Boon. Also, any Scion can spend a point of Legend and play a tune on the syrinx to invoke the Bacchanalia effect just like the satyr power. Once the Scion has used that particular syrinx once for either purpose, however, he cannot use it again until he has had sex with a number of different partners equal to the Legend rating of the satyr from whom the pipes were taken. The Scion can never count someone with whom he has already had sex in the past as a partner for activating this trophy.

Other Notes: None

SIMURGH

Simurgh is a mystery, even to himself. An incarnation of the principle of rebirth, Simurgh has died and been reborn millions of times. He considers himself a titanspawn, and a devoted servant of the Titans' cause, but he is unlike any other titanspawn known to exist. Beautiful, eloquent, passionate, Simurgh can make his enemies love him with a glance, and his power of near instant reincarnation may well make him truly impossible to kill. Certainly dozens of Gods have tried over the millennia to no avail.

Only one mythological being is identified as Simurgh. That is an immense bird from Persian myth, invariably female, large enough to prey on elephants, who was a creature of purity and vast knowledge. Certainly, in his natural form, the Simurgh who has seduced Itzpapalotl bears little resemblance to that creature, but no one seems to know who this Simurgh is. Is he a new titanspawn, more refined and cunning than the usual monstrosities, or is he some forgotten God who refused to join the great Pantheons when they rose up against the Titans?

Whatever his origin, Simurgh keeps his mysteries to himself. He has been Itzpapalotl's lover for some time. He cares nothing for her, of course, but he is delighted with what wondrous new life she has spawned and given to him. More information about Simurgh and his schemes can be found on pages 125-127.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5; Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 5; Perception 5, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

Virtues: Ambition 2, Malice 3, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 1

Abilities: Academics 3, Animal Ken 2, Athletics 5, Awareness 3, Brawl 2, Command 2, Empathy 4, Fortitude 5, Integrity 3, Investigation 1, Larceny 2, Medicine 2, Melee 2, Occult 3, Politics 3, Presence 5, Stealth 1, Survival 1, Thrown 2

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 4 (Crushing Grip, Holy Rampage, Hurl to the Horizon, Knockback Attack), Epic Stamina 4 (Inner Furnace, Regeneration, Self-Healing, Solipsistic Well-Being), Epic Charisma 7 (Benefit of the Doubt, BFF, Blessing of Importance, Charmer, Crowd Control, Inspirational Figure, Preach On), Epic Manipulation 7 (Advantageous Circumstances, Blurt It Out, Hard Sell, Instant Hypnosis, Knowing Glance, Overt Order, Takes One to Know One), Epic Appearance 5 (Blinding Visage, Come Hither, Inescapable Vision, Lasting Impression, Perfect Actor)

Form of the Simurgh Bird: By spending a single Legend point, Simurgh can transform himself into the form of a great raptor of incredible size, with a wingspan of over 100 feet. While in this form, Simurgh's Epic Strength and Epic Stamina both increase to 7 (giving him the Devourer, Divine Fortitude, Divine Rampage, Divine Wrath, Holy Fortitude and Uplifting Might Knacks), while his mundane Strength and Stamina increase to 15. The bird's health levels are -0x31/Incap.

Immortality: If Simurgh is killed, he will be reborn without any injuries and in the peak of health the next morning.

Join Battle: 8

Attacks:

Claw: Accuracy 8, Damage 10L, Parry DV 4, Speed 4

Clinch: Accuracy 7, Damage 6L, Parry DV —, Speed , P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 6, Damage 9L, Parry DV 3, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 8, Damage 6L, Parry DV 4, Speed 4

Soak: 4A/10L/12B (7A/25L/27B in bird form)

Health Levels: -0x13/Incap

Dodge DV: 8 Willpower: 6

Legend: 5 Legend Points: 25

Other Notes: In his normal form, Simurgh can fly at five times his normal movement rate in combat or at 50 miles per hour out of combat.

SPHINX

Sphinxes are a type of minion creature common to Egyptian and Greek legends. The progenitor of the sphinx race is a gigantic sphinx called Sesheps, which was transformed to stone not long after the Titans were bound. Sesheps herself is more properly described as a chimera and is discussed more fully on pages 267-268. The enormous Sesheps was born pregnant, and produced a brood of a dozen smaller sphinxes through parthenogenesis every six months. While the Pesedjet initially sought to kill Sesheps, they were warned by Bastet that doing so would unleash a powerful curse of Fate on all that was. Erring on the side of caution, the Gods of the Pesedjet turned Sesheps to stone instead. Then, uncertain of whether this nameless doom would fall if Sesheps' many children were killed, the Gods chose to petrify as many of them as possible too. Soon enough, sphinx statuary became a staple of Egyptian architecture and art, with none of the mortal owners suspecting that many of the new objets d'art were actually petrified living creatures.

There are three types of sphinx, all identical save for appearance. The androsphinx has the body of a lion and the head of a person. The criosphinx has the body of a lion and the head of a ram. Finally, the hierocosphinx has the body of a lion and the head of a falcon or hawk. All sphinxes are highly intelligent, and while they remain independent creatures, they do have some form of collective intelligence. Any fact that any sphinx learns is instantly known by all other sphinxes. Of course, this was a far cry from the de facto omniscience that Sesheps herself possessed, but the Gods of the Pesedjet saw potential in this curious feature, and using powerful magic, they bound the petrified sphinxes under a geas. Any Scion could spend a point of Legend to restore a sphinx to life. The creature was forbidden to harm anyone while free *unless* the one who awoke it failed to answer a riddle of the sphinx's choice. If the Scion could not answer within three guesses, the sphinx was free to act as it chose (whether attacking the Scion, running away, etc.). If the Scion succeeded, the sphinx would be compelled to answer three questions before turning back into a statue. The Pesedjet did put some limitations on this benefit, however. No sphinx could ever reveal any secret of the Gods or give away any knowledge of the higher realms, the Underworld or the Titans. Virtually any question about the World, however, was fair game.

Yet not all sphinxes were bound to serve as information brokers. Some Gods used them instead as guardians, setting their stone forms at areas which needed protection and commanding them to awaken and slay any intruder who could not solve a particular riddle. Exactly why riddles were an essential part of the equation is known only

to Bastet, who when questioned on the subject, merely mutters something about "the mysteries of Fate" before changing the subject.

"The mysteries of Fate" also explain why the ancient Egyptian creature is identified by a Greek name. The first recorded use of the name "sphinx" comes from Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, a play that detailed how Oedipus became king of Thebes after solving the most famous of all sphinx riddles. Unfortunately, he went on to slay the sphinx (so named from the Greek verb for "to strangle," the beast's preferred method of killing her prey), the first one to be killed since Bastet proclaimed the creatures protected by Fate. And Fate wrought a terrible revenge on Oedipus, who eventually discovered that his wife was his own mother and that his four children were the products of his incest.

In the modern era, Scions mainly encounter sphinxes either as guardians for ancient tombs or as dusty museum pieces. The old magic still works though, and any Scion can activate a sphinx by feeding it a single point of Legend. The Scion must then answer its riddle or fight it to the death, knowing that if he kills the beast, he may suffer the curse of Fate itself.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2; Perception 3, Intelligence 5, Wits 4

Virtues: Ambition 2, Malice 3, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Academics 5, Athletics 5, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Occult 5

Supernatural Powers:

Curse of Fate: Anyone who strikes a killing blow against a sphinx suffers a powerful Fate curse. She is doomed to suffer a number of automatic botches equal to the sphinx's Legend rating at times chosen by the Storyteller. Some of these botches might take years to be triggered, but they *will* serve to make the Scion's fate as chilling and inevitable as that of Oedipus himself.

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 3 (Divine Rampage, Holy Rampage, Knockback Attack), Epic Stamina 3 (Damage Conversion, Inner Furnace, Self-Healing)

Fountain of Knowledge: If compelled to do so, the sphinx can answer up to three questions presented by the person who awakens it. The sphinx cannot answer any questions directly concerning the Gods, the Titans or the higher or lower realms. The sphinx's knowledge of the World, however, is vast. The sphinx can answer a question with a successful (Intelligence + Academics or Occult) roll, adding its Legend rating as automatic successes, against a difficulty set by the Storyteller based on the obscurity of the information.

Tough Hide: The sphinx's hide is tough, although not nearly as durable as that of its mother, Sesheps. A sphinx gains five additional lethal and bashing soak.

Join Battle: 8

Attacks:

Claws: Accuracy 8, Damage 9L, Parry DV 4, Speed 5

Bite (hierocosphinx only): Accuracy 10, Damage 7L, Parry DV —, Speed 4

Ram (criosphinx only): Accuracy 9, Damage 8B, Parry DV 4, Speed 6

Soak: 3A/12L/14B

Health Levels: -0x11/Incap

Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 4 **Legend Points:** 16

Trophy: The trophy of the sphinx, if any, is unknown. The only person known to have ever killed one went on to become a great king before ending his life blind, miserable and consumed with guilt over his own accidental incest.

Other Notes: None

SVARTALFAR

When the Aesir destroyed the Titan Ymir, they freed his spawn, the dwarves, from bondage to the Titans. What few Aesir realized at the time was that the dwarves were not fully developed creatures. Rather, they were in effect a "larval stage" for a more powerful being—the black alfar or svartalfar, a malignant parody of the glorious alfar (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 296). Fortunately, Ymir's destruction interrupted the process by which svartalfar were created, and most of them remained in their weaker, embryonic dwarf form. While the dwarves readily swore fealty to Odin, their older and more powerful kin were already completely infused with the dark power of the Titans and remained loyal to their cause throughout the Titans' exile. Now that the Titans are free, the dark alfar stand ready to aid them in spreading a blanket of eternal darkness across the World.

In terms of power, svartalfar are roughly comparable to the true alfar. While none is a match for the Aesir, a typical svartalfar is roughly comparable to a demigod in power. In appearance, svartalfar are taller and thinner than dwarves, with gaunt faces, black skin and white hair. Svartalfar have the dwarves' natural affinity for craftsmanship, but their works often carry powerful curses that plague those who accept the items. Throughout history, many Scions of the Aesir met their ends through cursed relics delivered into their hands by cunning svartalfar. Svartalfar do not suffer petrifaction when exposed to sunlight. Direct exposure to it does inflict aggravated damage on svartalfar, though, so they avoid daylight at all costs. The number of damage dice typically ranges from one die for a small shaft of reflected sunlight to five dice for being staked outside naked on a sunny day. The damage roll is made once per scene unless the amount of damage dice increases (such as when a small shaft is expanded into direct exposure to the sun), in which case a new roll is made.

Trophy: When a svartalfar dies, he decomposes so swiftly that all that remains in a few minutes is a single lock of white hair. When that lock is braided into the Scion's own hair, she gains the power to see through illusions automatically unless the illusion was created by someone with a Legend rating at least two dots higher than her own.

FAFNIR, KING OF THE SVARTALFAR

The tale of Fafnir is one that has changed much in the telling over the centuries—very little of it actually played out as it does in Wagner's *Ring* Cycle. Fafnir was the most powerful and cunning of the svartalfar (neither a dwarf nor a giant as some tales say). After his brother Otr was accidentally killed by Loki, Fafnir's father, Hreidmar, demanded as recompense a vast quantity of gold. Loki paid his debt with a large cache of gold he had stolen from a svartalfar named Andvari, as well as a ring called Andvarinaut. In fact, Loki deliberately manipulated events so that he could "be forced" to turn over the gold to another person, having discovered too late that Andvari had wrought a curse on both the gold and the ring. Soon after, Hreidmar and Fafnir's older brother Regin came to blows over who was entitled to the ring and killed one another. Fafnir, smarter than the rest of his family, quickly realized that the ring was cursed, but all his efforts to be rid of it came to naught, as it always returned to his hand.

Realizing that he could only be rid of the ring (which inevitably brought doom to its owner) if someone else took it from him, Fafnir decided to use the curse to his advantage. He transformed himself into a dragon and spread legends of the great horde of gold he defended. Eventually, a heroic Scion named Sigurd came to slay the dragon and seize the treasure. Fafnir allowed Sigurd to "slay" him, knowing that his own magic would restore him to life. The revived Fafnir then returned to his kingdom to reign over his tribe of svartalfar, having ensured that Andvarinaut would now be Sigurd's problem instead of his own. Sure enough, Sigurd was soon murdered for the ring, which passed through a number of hands before returning to Andvari. Andvari then removed the curse from Andvarinaut and presented it to Fafnir as a symbol of his right to rule the svartalfar.

Today, Fafnir splits his time between his kingdom of Svartalfheim and the World. When among humans, he uses the power of Andvarinaut to spread greed and avarice among them. He takes great pride in the growing income disparities that threaten the social fabric of the United States and other nations, as well as in the greed of corporations that are content to despoil the environment with no thought at all for future generations.

In his true form, Fafnir appears to be an incredibly handsome and alluring male, with coal-black skin and long white hair. A master shapeshifter, he most often meets with humans in the guise of an impossibly beautiful man, but when battle is called for, he transforms himself into a ferocious dragon. He also has powerful mind-control and illusion powers, as well as the corruptive powers inherent in Andvarinaut.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 6, Stamina 5; Charisma 6, Manipulation 6, Appearance 5; Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

Virtues: Ambition 4, Malice 4, Rapacity 2, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Academics 3, Animal Ken 1, Art (Shadow) 3, Athletics 5, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Command 5, Control (Automobile) 3, Craft (Smithing) 4, Empathy 4, Fortitude 3, Integrity 4, Investigation 2, Larceny 3, Marksmanship 4, Medicine 1, Melee 4, Occult 6, Politics 5, Presence 6, Science 2, Stealth 4, Survival 3, Thrown 3

Supernatural Powers:

Andvarinaut: The fabulous ring of Andvari is the source of much of Fafnir's power. While he wears the ring, Fafnir's Legend rating is considered two points higher with an appropriate increase in temporary Legend points. The ring also allows him to cause others to be consumed with greed. Mechanically, Fafnir's player must roll (Charisma + Command), adding his Legend in automatic successes, resisted by the target's (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) roll. If the roll for Fafnir garners more successes, the target replaces his highest Virtue with an equivalent amount of the Rapacity Dark Virtue. Mortals, who don't normally have Virtues, are even more vulnerable to this effect and automatically gain a Rapacity Dark Virtue rating of 5. The effect lasts for one month per threshold success when used against mortals or Scions with a Legend rating below Fafnir's or one day per success when used against Scions with an equivalent or higher rating. Finally, the ring grants Fafnir a +10 lethal and bashing soak bonus.

Boons: Death Senses, Magic 5, Night Eyes, Shadow Craft, Shadow Mask, Shadow Refuge, Shadow Step, Unquiet Corpse

Dragon Form: Fafnir can transform himself into that of a powerful winged dragon at the cost of a single Legend point. In this form, he has all the powers and Attributes of the great wurm Nidhogg (see p. 234), except that he can also fly at his normal movement rate times 10.

Epic Attributes: Epic Dexterity 5 (All Knacks in this book and **Scion: Hero**), Epic Manipulation 5 (All Knacks in this book and **Scion: Hero**)

Spells: Every spell in this book and **Scion: Hero** plus many others.

Join Battle: 8

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 11, Damage 6B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Foe-Cutter: Accuracy 13, Damage 11L, Parry DV 18, Speed 4

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 10, Damage 9B, Parry DV 16, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 12, Damage 6B, Parry DV 17, Speed 4

Warmaker: Accuracy 14, Damage 6L, Range 30, Speed 4, P

Soak: 13L/15B

Health Levels: -0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 21 **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 8 **Legend Points:** 64

Trophy: In addition to the normal svartalfar trophy, the Scion who kills Fafnir gains possession of Foe-Cutter and Warmaker. She also gains possession of Andvarinaut... if she can keep it. The ring is cursed so that only titanspawn can safely use it. If a Scion or even a mortal wears the ring, it will function normally except that its greed-inducing power is *automatically* triggered on anyone else who sees the ring on its new owner's finger. (This usage does not cost the ring-bearer any Legend.) Those affected by this facet of the ring gain Rapacity ratings as normal and also become obsessed with gaining Andvarinaut for themselves. Also, the ring-bearer's player must roll (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) every day against a difficulty of 7. The first time this roll fails, the ring-bearer replaces his lowest rated Virtue with Rapacity. Every time the player fails the roll thereafter, the character's Rapacity increases by one until it reaches 5.

Other Notes: Fafnir's sword, "Foe-Cutter," is a large spatha with the following enhanced traits: Accuracy +3, Damage +5L, Defense +3, Speed 4. When active in the World, he also carries specially modified a Colt .45 called "Warmaker," which never needs reloading and has the following traits: Accuracy +4, Damage +5L, Range 30, Speed 4.

THERIANTHROPES

Cultures from around the planet repeat tales of mortals who can take the forms of beasts. By far the most commonly repeated are the tales of the werewolf, a creature that is half-man and half-wolf. Legends of such creatures are found among the Greeks (the lycanthropos) and the Norse (kved-ulf), while Spanish explorers in the New World returned with tales of the "lobizon." There are many other legends of shapeshifting mortals around the World, though: the South American balamob, or jaguar people; the African bouda, or werehyenas; and the selkies, or seal-people, of Irish and Celtic myth.

Collectively, such beings are referred to as therianthropes, human beings who can change into animals. A wide variety of legendry is associated with therianthropes around the World, largely due to the failure of mortals to understand exactly how this condition spreads. Therianthropy is actually a titanspawn disease with multiple "strains," each of which allows the victim to transform into a different type of animal. This disease was magically created millennia ago by a powerful titanspawn named Proteus, the son of the Titan Okeanos and a gifted shapeshifter as well. At his sire's command, Proteus used his own mercurial nature to transmute common rabies into a vector for chthonic taint.

Roll (Stamina + Fortitude) for any mortal bitten by a therianthrope against a difficulty equal to the therianthrope's Legend. Failure means that the mortal contracts stage one of the therianthropic disease. At the first stage, the victim has no control over her transformation and will spontaneously change into the appropriate animal when exposed to a given stimulus. For example, stage-one werewolves most commonly transform when exposed to the light of the full moon, although some strains cause transformation in other situations, such as when the scent of blood is in the air or when the victim is overly excited. Stage-one selkies, on the other hand, transform whenever they're in sight of the sea, while balamob transform whenever they are within a jungle. When the stage-one therianthrope assumes her animal form, her intellect is reduced to that of the animal in question, and she is typically a very belligerent specimen of the animal. If the animal is predatory (which is typically the case), she will be a man-eater. The experience of the change is invariably terrifying to the mortal once she returns to her human form. While she has no control over her animal instincts while in animal form, she remembers everything clearly once she returns to normal, including anyone she has killed during her change.

Humans at this stage often begin desperately looking for a cure for their condition. Many foolishly seek medical help, which usually results in involuntary confinement in a mental institution (at least until the next full moon). In fact, there is only one cure for therianthropy—the victim must find and kill the therianthrope who infected her and devour the creature's heart. If the victim is unable to do so (or if the original therianthrope dies before she can find him), there is no cure short of divine intervention. Of course, the victim may have no way of knowing how to cure herself or even who the original therianthrope was. Therianthropes in the service of the Titans use this ignorance to their advantage, contacting the victim indirectly and providing false clues to a cure—one that leads the victim inexorably to selling herself to the Titans in exchange for control over her condition.

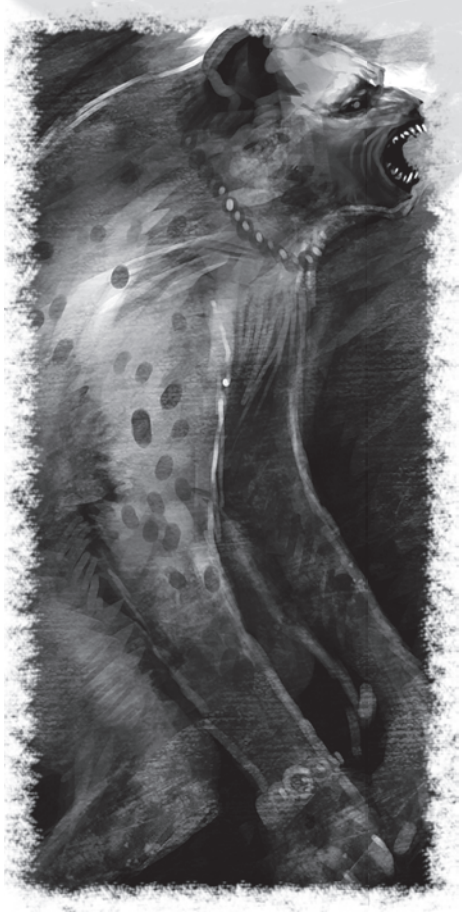
A therianthrope can fall under the sway of the Titans in several ways. Some listen to the honeyed lies of other titanspawn (perhaps even the elder therianthrope who infected the young victim in the first place), submitting to dark rituals that taint their souls. Others try to resist temptation on their own, constantly struggling with the fear of losing control. The path to damnation is slower for such therianthropes but still just as inevitable. Every time a stage-one therianthrope takes a human life while in her animal form, roll her (Intelligence + Integrity) against a difficulty equal to the Legend of the therianthrope who infected her. If the roll fails, she slips to stage two.

A stage-two therianthrope gains the power to control her transformations, changing whenever she wishes with the expenditure of a Legend point. The price she pays for this control is the acquisition of Dark Virtues. When a young therianthrope reaches stage two, she gains a single dot in Rapacity. Thereafter, whenever she changes, roll her (Intelligence + Integrity) again at the difficulty of the elder therianthrope's Legend. Every time this roll fails, she gains an additional Dark Virtue point chosen by the Storyteller. When a young therianthrope gains a number of Dark Virtue points equal to the Legend rating of the one who infected her, she reaches the final stage of therianthropy and is irrevocably lost to her new condition. She revels in the carnage she unleashes in her animal form and is openly contemptuous of humanity. She also gains the power to blend her human and animal traits, assuming a deadly "manimal" form. Worst of all, she becomes a willing slave to the Titans, and nothing short of divine intervention can free her from this state.

Of course, in a game such as **Scion**, divine intervention is certainly available, and if a God intervenes and provides a Scion with the cure for a victim of therianthropy, the Scion may well gain a potent ally. Most of the balamob, for example, are completely loyal to the Atzlánti, while an entire secret society of werewolves known as Le Fraternite des Loups was freed from Titan slavery by the power of the Loa Marinette. Free therianthropes can be taken as followers, but only with Storyteller permission. Doing so increases the Birthright cost of the followers by three.

As noted previously, there are a wide variety of therianthropic strains in the World. Therianthropes do not have trophies, but some of the more powerful therianthropes, who directly serve the Titans, are armed with powerful relics. Three different therianthropes of differing power levels are described here:

HAYDEN MARSH, VICTIM OF THE HYENA'S CURSE



In the summer of 2006, Hayden Marsh, a coed from Southern Methodist University, was attached to a mission trip to Kenya. While on a sightseeing expedition out on the savanna, she was attacked by a hyena. She recovered nicely from the attack and returned home to Dallas. A few days later, she went through the first change and became a hyena. The animal that attacked her was actually a bouda, or werehyena, and specifically, one who was an active servant of the Titans.

Terrified by her uncontrolled transformations, Hayden has dropped out of school and is searching desperately for a cure. Unbeknownst to her, Hayden is also being pursued by two separate groups of bouda. The first is a pack of free bouda that has sworn loyalty to the God Anubis. The other is a pack of titanspawn bouda led by the werehyena who bit Hayden, which wants to turn her to the service of the Titan Apep. Of course, her midnight rampages could easily attract the attention of any Scions who cross her path.

Like all bouda, Hayden assumes the form of a hyena on the nights of the new moon (rather than the full moon).

Attributes (human)**:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Virtues: Essentially still a mortal in personality, Hayden has no Virtues.

Abilities: Academics 2, Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl 1, Control 1, Empathy 1, Fortitude 1, Integrity 1, Investigation 1, Presence 1, Science 1, Stealth 2, Thrown 2

Supernatural Powers:

Hyena Form: When the sun sets on nights of the new moon, Hayden spontaneously transforms into a hyena. In her hyena form, she experiences the following changes to her traits: Strength +2, Dexterity +2, Stamina +2, Perception +2. Her Intelligence is reduced to that of a hyena, and she gains all of that animal's predatory instincts. Bouda who reach Stage 3 of the infection (both those who serve the Titans and those who are free) retain their normal human intellects while in hyena form. Hayden also gains soak equal to +2L/4B, and a +2 bonus to all tracking-related rolls.

Join Battle: 4

Attacks:

Hyena Form

Bite: Accuracy 6, Damage 7L, Parry DV —, Speed 4

Human Form

Clinch: Accuracy 3, Damage 3B, Parry DV —, Speed 6

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 2, Damage 6B, Parry DV 1, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 4, Damage 3B, Parry DV 2, Speed 4

Soak: 2L/3B (human); 4L/7B (hyena)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 3 (4 in hyena form) **Willpower:** 4

Legend: 2 **Legend Points:** 4

Other Notes: None

TOMMY KEHANU, THE SELKIE WARRIOR

In 1952, Tommy Kehanu was an aspiring surfer from Honolulu, Hawaii, until one day, while doing a little night surfing at an isolated beach area, he was attacked and bitten by a group of selkies looking to "recruit" some new members. Selkies remain in their hybrid form whenever (and for as long as) they are immersed in seawater. A month after his attack, Tommy went surfing again and went through his first transformation the first time he wiped out. The selkies who first attacked him were already there waiting for him, and they transported the terrified young man hundreds of miles from his home and indoctrinated him in the ways of Titan worship. Having spent the better part of the last 50 years underwater, Tommy has become a victim of Stockholm Syndrome and can no longer conceive of returning to land and freeing himself from servitude to the Titans.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3; Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3
Virtues: Ambition 1, Malice 2, Rapacity 2, Zealotry 3
Abilities: Animal Ken 2, Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Brawl 4, Fortitude 2, Integrity 3, Melee 2, Stealth 3, Survival 4
Supernatural Powers:
Selkie Form: In his seal-man form, Tommy is amphibious but strongly prefers being underwater. He can survive underwater to almost any depth, and he can swim at five times his normal movement rate.
Tough Skin: In his selkie form, Tommy gains +4 lethal and bashing soak.
Join Battle: 5
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 8, Damage 5B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P
Trident: Accuracy 6, Damage 8L, Parry DV 4, Speed 5
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 7, Damage 8B, Parry DV 3, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 9, Damage 5B, Parry DV 5, Speed 4
Soak: 6L/7B
Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap
Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 5
Legend: 2 **Legend Points:** 4
Other Notes: Though the method of transference for the selkie therianthropy variant remains a bite, selkies lack a bite attack. A victim would have to be rendered helpless prior to being infected, and even then, damage from the bite would be negligible, just enough to break the skin.

WERNER KRIEGER, THE WOLF OF THE BLACK FOREST

Werner Krieger, also known as the Wolf of the Black Forest, is a Bavarian werewolf and a powerful leader among those werewolves who serve the Titans. Werner is actually a scion (small "s") of a werewolf family that has existed since the time when the Aesir walked openly in the World. Descended from the original Kved-Ulf, the progenitor of all werewolves, Werner's ancestors have served as a Titan-worshiping cult for centuries. Yet within each generation, only the most intelligent and cunning heirs of the Krieger family received "the wolf's kiss," a bite from an elder werewolf that transforms the recipient into a werewolf. Werner himself received the wolf's kiss in 1843. In the time since, he has risen to become the patriarch of the entire Krieger family.

Of course, the Krieger family is much more than mere Titan cult—Krieger Munitions has been among the most prominent weapons manufacturers in the World for more than a century. While the Kriegers were heavily involved with the Nazis during World War II, only a few token members (all mortal) faced justice at Nuremburg. Werner and his siblings all made a great show of rejecting the Third Reich, even as they secretly gave financial support to the Thule Society and other fascist conspiracies.

Today, Werner is "retired" from actively running Krieger Munitions. In fact, the escape of the Titans has encouraged him to focus his full attention on the bidding of his masters. He has directed untold millions of dollars into finding Scions and exterminating them while they are still young. He also directs the operations of dozens of hidden conspiracies consisting of wealthy businessmen, intelligence operatives and military officers. These conspiracies scour the World for hidden relics and doorways to lost places, all for the benefit of Werner's Titan masters.

Of course, for all his business and social acumen, Werner Krieger is first and foremost a werewolf, and he is certainly not above getting his claws dirty. Werner frequently leads

werewolf packs consisting of his own family members against the most powerful Scions. Younger Scions fare even worse. Werner often arranges for captured Scions to be transported to his remote Bavarian estate, stripped of their Birthrights and then released into the Black Forest for Werner and his kin to hunt down and kill.

Werner is a giant of a man, with gray hair and a matching beard, typically dressed in the finest suits when he doesn't expect to shift into his hybrid form. Although he is nearly 200 years old, he could pass for a man in his 60s. In his wolf-man form, he stands over seven feet tall and is covered with the dark red fur associated with European wolves.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5; Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4; Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

Virtues: Ambition 4, Malice 4, Rapacity 4, Zealotry 3

Abilities: Academics 3, Animal Ken 2, Art 1, Athletics 5, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Command 4, Control 2, Craft 1, Empathy 4, Fortitude 5, Integrity 5, Investigation 2, Larceny 1, Marksmanship 5, Medicine 1, Melee 5, Occult 4, Politics 4, Presence 4, Science 2, Stealth 4, Survival 5, Thrown 3

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 3 (All Knacks from **Scion: Hero**), Epic Stamina 3 (All Knacks from **Scion: Hero**), Epic Perception 3 (All Knacks from **Scion: Hero** plus Supernal Hunter)

Regeneration: Like all werewolves, Krieger heals his injuries at a phenomenal rate. He heals one bashing level of damage every five ticks and one lethal level every 10 ticks. Krieger cannot accelerate his healing of aggravated damage, including damage from silver.

Wolf Form: As a miscellaneous action, Krieger can transform himself into a wolf that is identical in all respects to a normal wolf (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 332), except that he retains his normal intellect and his Epic Attributes. Assuming this form costs nothing.

Hybrid Form: By spending a Legend point, Krieger can turn into a humanoid wolf-man creature. In this form, Krieger gains +3 to his Strength, Dexterity and Stamina, and his claws and bite inflict +2L damage.

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Bite (hybrid form only): Accuracy 13, Damage 11L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Clinch: Accuracy 10 (13 in hybrid form), Damage 6L (9L in hybrid form), Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Rapier: Accuracy 12 (15 in hybrid form), Damage 11L (14L in hybrid form), Parry DV 6 (8 in hybrid form), Speed 4

Colt .45: Accuracy 15 (18 in hybrid form), Damage 5L, Range 20, Speed 5, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9 (12 in hybrid form), Damage 9B (14L in hybrid form), Parry DV 4 (6 in hybrid form), Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11 (14 in hybrid form), Damage 6B (11L in hybrid form), Parry DV 6 (7 in hybrid form), Speed 4

Soak: 3A/7L/9B (human or wolf forms); 3A/8L/12B (hybrid form)

Health Levels: -0x6/Incap

Dodge DV: 7 (human or wolf forms); 9 (hybrid form) **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 4 **Legend Points:** 16

Trophy: When Werner goes on his "hunting excursions," he typically carries with him a pair of pearl-handled Colt .45 pistols that he acquired from the body of a Scion and Texas Ranger he fought and killed in 1879. The pistols add an additional +3 to Accuracy, and regardless of what ammunition is put into them, they always fire silver bullets (which inflict aggravated damage on werewolves and some other types of therianthropes). He also has a rapier enhanced with the following traits: Accuracy +2, Damage +5L, Defense +2, Speed 4.

Other Notes: Werewolves are vulnerable to silver. Any successful attack with a silver weapon (silver bullets, a silver knife, etc.) inflicts aggravated damage. Furthermore, while any silver is inside a werewolf's body, such as a silver bullet, the werewolf's regeneration powers do not function.

YUKI-ONNA

The yuki-onna, or "snow woman," is a type of minion most commonly encountered by Scions of the Amatsukami, but over the years, the creature has spread to most every climate cold enough to support her existence. Formed of the infusion of elemental cold into mortal women, yuki-onna are compelled to seek out mortals, almost invariably men, and drain them of their life energies, leaving only a frozen corpse behind.

Most yuki-onna descend into feral conduct and spend their lives stalking snowy territories for sustenance. Some few are much more cunning in their hunts, however, setting up lairs in ski resorts and hunting lodges. One, for example, winters in Jukkasjarvi, Sweden, within the famous Ice Hotel, where she seduces lonely men into her frozen boudoir to feed her hunger.

Yuki-onna reproduce by mating with their victims before feeding. Once impregnated, a yuki-onna gives birth to a female child before the end of the winter, and the child grows to adulthood before the first snowfall of the next winter. Yuki-onna appear to be mortal women of incredible beauty (usually but not always Asian) until they beginning draining their victims of life. Then, their true visage is plain—white hair, unearthly pale skin, and the telltale signs of frostbite on all their extremities.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4; Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Ambition 2, Malice 3, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 1

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Brawl 2, Empathy 3, Fortitude 4, Integrity 4, Larceny 1, Presence 2, Survival 4

Supernatural Powers:

Blizzard: Once per week, the yuki-onna can summon a blizzard to her location. To do so, she must spend a point of Legend and roll (Wits + Survival) against a variable difficulty based on the weather conditions when the blizzard was summoned. The power will function only during winter and in environments where blizzards are possible. The blizzard can potentially affect a very large area. Normally, the yuki-onna will use this power to strand potential victims in an enclosed area so that she can prey upon them.

Touch of Frost: When the yuki-onna touches a living person, she can choose to inflict a curse of agonizing cold on him. The yuki-onna must touch the target, which might require an attack roll. Regardless of any other effects of such an attack, the yuki-onna can spend one Legend and roll (Stamina + Survival + Legend) against the target's (Stamina + Fortitude + Legend). For every success by which the yuki-onna's successes exceed those of her victim, the target suffers one level of unsoakable lethal damage as an unearthly cold seeps through his body. Also, for every level of damage inflicted, the yuki-onna regains two points of Legend, up to her normal maximum. If the victim dies as a result of this power, his corpse looks as though he died of severe exposure and frostbite.

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 6, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 5, Damage 7B, Parry DV 2, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 7, Damage 4B, Parry DV 4, Speed 4

Soak: 2L/3B

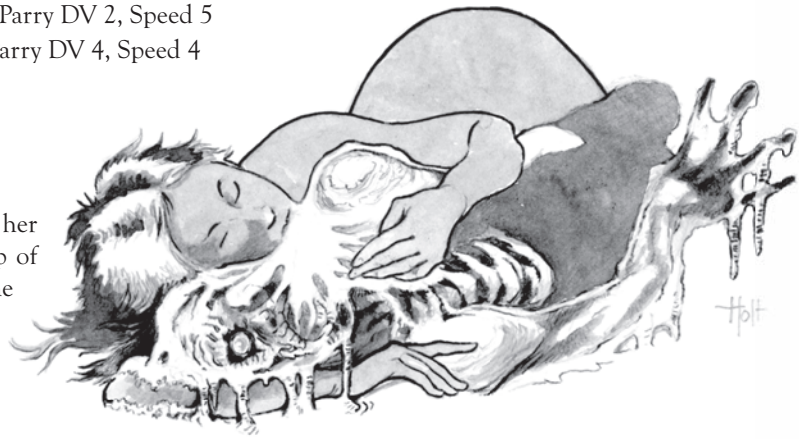
Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 4 **Legend Points:** 16

Trophy: The trophy of a yuki-onna is her tongue, which appears to be a solid lump of ice that never melts. A Scion who puts the yuki-onna's tongue in his own mouth is totally immune to all forms of cold damage for the duration.

Other Notes: None



OTHER SCIONS

For good or ill, Scions often interact with their demigod peers. What follows are two rival Bands of Scions for the player's characters to meet. The first Band is Kane Taoka's Shinsengumi, now raised to demigod status by their experiences and growing Legend and consequently even more dangerous than before. The other is the Hand of Tyr, a younger, less-experienced Band of Scions that the players' characters might meet when their quest takes them to the island of Aeaea. Up first, though, is the architect of monsters, Ixion. He was instrumental in the creation of Scylla, the Horsemen and the original centaurs, among other monstrosities.

IXION, THE CORRUPTED SCION

As powerful as Scions can become, there are few whose names can cause the Gods themselves to shudder. One such name is that of Ixion. Ixion the Corrupted. Ixion the Fleshcrafter. Ixion of the Flaming Wheel. A Scion of Ares and one of the first of all Scions, Ixion rose to the rank of demigod before his incipient madness led him to ally with the Titans against the Dodekatheon. He did so in exchange for promises that he would be allowed to rule over the Gods of

ancient Greece in Zeus's place and have the Goddess Hera as his concubine. The Titans secretly augmented his Legend, raising him to near godhood, and they quietly schooled him in forbidden magical practices. With their tutelage, he gained the power to redefine the properties of life itself by combining disparate creatures into a single new life form. Through Ixion's dark experiments, the Titans learned how to fashion entire minion races, and where they once fielded only crude chimerae against the Gods, Ixion showed them how to forge entire species as self-replicating weapons.

And all the while, Ixion continued to serve as a Scion in good standing, attending feasts on Mt. Olympus at his father's side and even "advising" the Gods on strategies against the Titans, even as he reported all of the Gods' plans to his true masters. Finally, one of Ixion's rivals, young Hermes, saw through the corrupted Scion's deceptions and persuaded Zeus that Ixion might be a traitor. While dubious, Zeus agreed to put Ixion to the test, and he forged a cloud into the likeness of his wife Hera. Dubbed "Nephele," this simulacrum was sent forth to seduce Ixion and determine where his loyalties lay (see "Nephele," p. 252). Nephele successfully exposed Ixion's treachery, and in a rage, Zeus struck him down with a lightning bolt. Ixion survived, barely, thanks to his Epic Stamina, and after the war, the Gods condemned him to Tartarus along with the Titans he once served.

Now, Ixion is free, and he is ready to pick up where he left off. Already, he has forged several new races of minions for the Titans, including the Horsemen (see **Scion: Hero**, pp. 310–312) and his "reimagining" of the monster Scylla (see pp. 266-267). Ixion rarely seeks direct combat with Scions—despite his own great power, he is too much a coward for that. He functions more as an evil mastermind behind the scenes.

Ixion appears as a relatively short man of Greek ancestry. In this modern era, he has taken a preference for wearing denim biker gear, which he views as the "warrior attire" of the day.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 7, Stamina 5; Charisma 6, Manipulation 6, Appearance 5; Perception 6, Intelligence 6, Wits 5

Virtues: Ambition 5, Malice 4, Rapacity 5, Zealotry 3

Abilities: Academics 4, Animal Ken 5, Art (Flesh-sculpting) 6, Athletics 5, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Command 3, Control (Motorcycle) 3, Craft (Life) 7, Empathy 4, Fortitude 5, Integrity 3, Investigation 3, Larceny 3, Marksmanship 4, Medicine 6, Melee 5, Occult 6, Politics 3, Presence 4, Science (Anatomy) 4, Stealth 3, Survival 4, Thrown 4

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Arete (Art) 5, Arete (Athletics) 2, Arete (Craft) 5, Arete (Medicine) 5, Arete (Fortitude) 7, Arete (Occult) 4, Arete (Presence) 4, Crawling Chaos, Eye of the Storm, Hornet's Nest, Instant Riot, Paralyzing Confusion, Recurring Distraction, Sabot

Create Monstrosity: Through an extended process, Ixion can infuse human beings or animals with the traits of other animals, elements or machines to create new life forms. This power is unique to Ixion among demigods, a gift from the Titans themselves. The power functions mainly as a plot device to justify the creation of new and modernized titanspawn life forms.

Epic Attributes: All Epic Attributes at the five-dot level. All Knacks available in **Scion: Hero**.

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 12, Damage 7L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Combat Knife: Accuracy 16, Damage 11L, Parry DV 19, Speed 3

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 11, Damage 10B, Parry DV 16, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 13, Damage 7B, Parry DV 18, Speed 4

Glock: Accuracy 13, Damage 4L, Range 20, Speed 4, P

Soak: 5A/20L/22B (Enchanted biker leathers and trench coat made from the skin of dead Scions, +6L/6B)

Health Levels: -0x17/Incap

Dodge DV: 21 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 8 **Legend Points:** 64

Other Notes: Ixion's combat knife is a KA-BAR Marine knife with the following enhanced traits: Accuracy +4, Damage +4L, Defense +3, Speed 3. His Glock has an additional +1 Accuracy and never needs reloading but is otherwise a normal firearm.

SHINSENGUMI

The Shinsengumi continues to operate as the will of Kane Taoka. Now, however, several members of the Band have come to realize that the setup's not kosher. Why do they so seldom fight titanspawn? In fact, aren't the tengu who work as Kane's operatives technically titanspawn? And how about those creepy shinobi? And was that an oni in the hallway of his mansion? And then there was his power trip while in possession of the Black Feather Shroud. They'd probably be even more concerned if they only realized they aren't even the first iteration of the Shinsengumi. But Kane Taoka's the only one alive with that knowledge.

The Band could be set to fragment in the near future, but for now, Kane's doing all he can to hold things together. He and Mikaboshi's end game is on the horizon, and he doesn't have time to recruit a new Band of Scions before it begins. The interference of the players' Scions in the Shroud fiasco makes the Shinsengumi's role all the more important. It needs to keep the players' Scions from interfering while Kane ends the World.

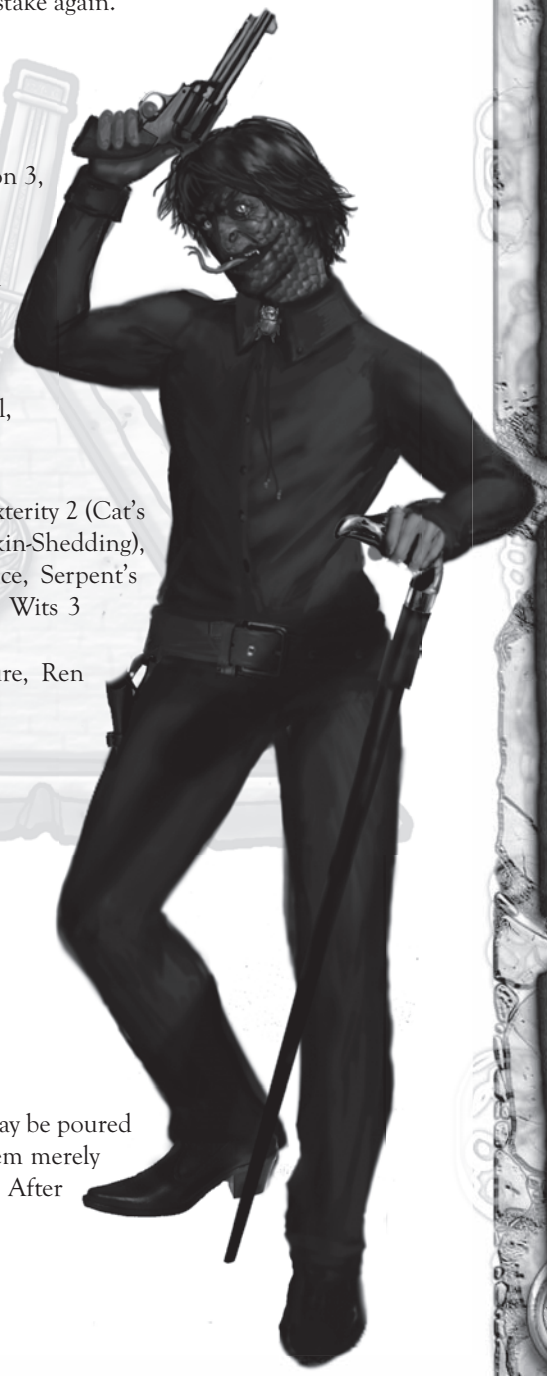
The membership of this Band remains:

- Seth Farrow, Scion of Set
- Marie Glapion, Scion of Erzulie
- Sylvester "Sly" Guiler, Scion of Loki
- Kane Taoka, Scion of Amaterasu and Mikaboshi
- Orlanda Elliot, Scion of Xipe Totec
- Victor Fingers, Scion of Ares

SETH FARROW
SCION OF SET

With his growing mastery of the Animal Purview, Seth Farrow is well on his way to becoming the snake in fact that he has always been in spirit. As some members of the Shinsengumi are coming to realize that there is far more to their group than thwarting the Titans, it's become Seth's job to keep things under control as much as possible and to eliminate anyone who becomes a liability. Seth keeps a close eye on Sly Guiler and Marie Glapion for Kane, but he's decided that the other two members of the Band are in no danger of rocking the boat. This decision will likely come back to haunt him if Victor Fingers ever gets wise to what's happening behind the scenes.

Seth's gained a lot of cronies recently, both magical and mundane, figuring it's likely he'll potentially have to take out members of the Shinsengumi and will need folks to take up their slack—and potentially to combat them. Although Seth's a big fan of getting his hands dirty, preferably with the knife concealed in his *was*, he's no fool. Underestimating someone once cost him dearly. He won't make that mistake again.



Calling: Outlaw
Nature: Rogue
Pantheon: Pesedjet
Patron: Set
Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3; Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2; Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 5
Virtues: Conviction 5, Harmony 1, Order 1, Piety 2
Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Brawl 2, Command 3, Control (Automobile) 1, Fortitude 2, Integrity 2, Larceny 3, Marksmanship 5, Melee 4, Presence 3, Stealth 2, Survival 3
Birthrights: Followers (15 Thugs) 3, Followers (15 Hungry Corpses [Mummies]) 5, Relic (Apep-Headed Canopic Jar) 2, Relic (Was—Animal, Guardian, War) 3
Supernatural Powers:
Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 2 (Crushing Grip, Divine Wrath), Epic Dexterity 2 (Cat's Grace, Trick Shooter), Epic Stamina 3 (Regeneration, Self Healing, Skin-Shedding), Epic Charisma 1 (Charmer), Epic Appearance 2 (Compelling Presence, Serpent's Gaze), Epic Perception 2 (Predatory Focus, Subliminal Warning), Epic Wits 3 (Cobra Reflexes, Instant Assessment, Opening Gambit)
Boons: Animal Aspect (Snake), Animal Feature (Snake), Morale Failure, Ren Harvest, Unseen Shield, Vigil Brand, Warrior Ideal (Gunslinger)
Join Battle: 8
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 6, Damage 4L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 5, Damage 7L, Parry DV 4, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 7, Damage 4L, Parry DV 6, Speed 4
Bowie Knife: Accuracy 9, Damage 6L, Parry DV 6, Speed 4
Peacemaker: Accuracy 11, Damage 5L, Range 20, Speed 5, P
Soak: 3A/6L/7B
Health Levels: -0x6/Incap
Dodge DV: 9 **Willpower:** 7
Legend: 6 **Legend Points:** 36
Other Notes: Seth's Apep-headed canopic jar contains black sand that may be poured out to whirl into the forms of his hungry mummy enforcers. Killing them merely reverts them to sand, which may be gathered up and replaced in the jar. After the next sunset, any "slain" mummies will be restored to potency.

MARIE GLAPION
SCION OF ERZULIE

Marie Glapion is getting scared. A smart cookie, she's suspected for a while that something sinister is going on, but Kane's behavior while in possession of the Black Feather Shroud clenched it. So now she's aware she's part of a bad scene (though she has no idea how bad), but she's convinced that Kane won't let any of his Scions just walk away. Unfortunately, she's unaware that Sly Guiler shares her suspicions and doesn't realize that she could have an ally in Victor Fingers if she'd just confess her fears and misgivings (which isn't really her MO). Marie's biggest hope is that Donnie Rhodes will swoop in out of nowhere and put everything right, but after her recent betrayal of him, she realizes that's probably a pipe dream.

Marie's use of her Voodoo doll, through which she channels the Health and Magic Purviews, has become even more effective as her mastery of sympathetic magic grows. She also now possesses a govi containing the spirit of her renowned ancestor Marie Laveau, which offers her access to the Death and Prophecy Purviews, makes ritual magic easier and puts the advice of her guide close at hand.

Unfortunately, having easy access to a guide doesn't help if you're too untrusting to share your real concerns. Marie Glapion has yet to even broach her fears about Kane with her namesake, although the shrewd old ghost could likely give her useful feedback. Story of her life, really.

Calling: Femme Fatale
Nature: Libertine
Pantheon: Loa
Patron: Erzulie
Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4; Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3
Virtues: Harmony 2, Order 2, Piety 2, Vengeance 3
Abilities: Academics 2, Art (Painting) 2, Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Command 1, Empathy 3, Fortitude 1, Integrity 3, Investigation 2, Larceny 2, Medicine 2, Melee 1, Occult 3, Politics 3, Presence 4, Stealth 1, Survival 1
Birthrights: Creature (Taureau-Trois-Graines) 4, Guide (Marie Laveau) 3, Relic (Chicken Claw) 1, Relic (Govi—Death, Prophecy) 4, Relic (Voodoo Doll—Health, Magic) 2
Supernatural Powers:
Epic Attributes: Epic Charisma 3 (BFF, Blessing of Importance, Charmer), Epic Manipulation 2 (Knowing Glance, Rumor Mill), Epic Appearance 4 (Center of Attention, Come Hither, Lasting Impression, Perfect Actor)
Boons: Assess Health, Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty, Cradlesong, Heal/Infect, Horse, Magic (4), *Met Tet*, Mind-Riding, Petro's Hands, Rada's Eyes, Waking Zombie
Spells: Bona Fortuna, Demand a Labor, Evil Eye, Fateful Connection, The Unlidded Eye
Join Battle: 5
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 5, Damage 2B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 4, Damage 3B, Parry DV 2, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 6, Damage 2B, Parry DV 3, Speed 4
Soak: 2L/3B
Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap
Dodge DV: 6 **Willpower:** 5
Legend: 7 **Legend Points:** 49
Other Notes: Marie's chicken claw relic allows her to summon the infamous minor loa Taureau as a miscellaneous action rather than a drawn-out ritual.

Sylvester Guiler
Scion of Loki

Sly Guiler continues to work for the Shinsengumi at his father's behest. However, it's becoming increasingly obvious to the demigod that he's being played. He's being kept in the dark about too many things and he doesn't like it. He'd already have bolted if he thought his father or Taoka wouldn't find and punish him. So he bides his time and takes out his frustrations when he can through acts of petty vandalism. Eventually an opportunity to extricate himself from this mess he's in will present itself, and he'll be waiting to seize it.

Sly possesses as his Birthrights the very pair of shears his father used to cut off the blond tresses of Sif, as well as a relic rope made from those very locks. He occasionally uses the shears as a weapon as well as a focus for his Boons, while the rope is useful for all manner of criminal endeavor. His father Loki has also presented Sly with a pack of ulfhednar wolf-warriors to act the muscle he lacks.

Calling: Con Man
Nature: Trickster
Pantheon: Aesir
Patron: Loki
Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Appearance 2; Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4
Virtues: Courage 2, Endurance 3, Expression 3, Loyalty 1
Abilities: Academics 2, Athletics 1, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Empathy 3, Fortitude 2, Integrity 2, Investigation 3, Larceny 5, Marksmanship 1, Melee 2, Occult 1, Politics 1, Stealth 4, Survival 2
Birthrights: Followers (Five Ulfhednar) 3, Guide (Ivaldi) 4, Relic (Shears—Chaos, Fire) 5, Relic (Sif's Locks) 3
Supernatural Powers:
Epic Attributes: Epic Dexterity 2 (Escape Artist, Untouchable Opponent), Epic Stamina 2 (Inner Furnace, Solipsistic Well-Being), Epic Charisma 1 (Benefit of the Doubt), Epic Manipulation 4 (Advantageous Circumstances, God's Honest, Knowing Glance, Takes One to Know One), Epic Intelligence 4 (Cipher, Know-It-All, Language Mastery, Math Genius), Epic Wits 4 (Meditative Focus, Perfect Imposter, Rabbit Reflexes, Social Chameleon)
Boons: Blazing Weapon, Bolster Fire, Eye of the Storm, Fire Immunity, Fire's Eye, Hornet's Nest, Jotunblut (2), Paralyzing Confusion, Sabot
Join Battle: 7
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 6, Damage 3B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 5, Damage 6B, Parry DV 4, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 7, Damage 3B, Parry DV 6, Speed 4
Shears: Accuracy 7, Damage 6L, Parry DV 5, Speed 4
Soak: 2A/4L/5B
Health Levels: -0x5/-4/Incap
Dodge DV: 7 **Willpower:** 6
Legend: 5 **Legend Points:** 25
Other Notes: Traits for the ulfhednar are located on page 258 of **Scion: Hero**. Sif's Locks is a rope constructed from the braided hair of the Goddess Sif. It may lengthen to whatever length Sly requires it to, and it's invulnerable to harm save that inflicted by his own shears. Sly's guide, Ivaldi, is a svartalfar leader and ally to Loki. He's being employed by the distrustful Lie-Smith as much to keep an eye on Sly as to advise him.

KANE TAOKA
SCION OF AMATERASU AND MIKABOSHI

Though robbed of his apotheosis by the players' Band during the events of "The Long Road to Heaven," Kane Taoka isn't disheartened by his scheme's failure, though he's quite disappointed he never discovered his then-mortal mother to destroy her during the affair. There will be time enough for that later. He and Mikaboshi's original scheme still proceeds apace with his agents' discovery of Atlantis. The Black Feather Shroud was but an opportunity he could not afford to ignore. Plan A had always been to raise the lost city and shroud the World in darkness.

Kane continues to play the stereotypical Japanese businessman, while directing his expanding criminal empire and his Band of rogue Scions. Mikaboshi's confidence in Kane has grown as well, so that the supernatural forces at his command have swelled to include tengu and oni, as well as other less portable monstrosities.

Calling: Harbinger of the Titans
Nature: Loner
Pantheon: Amatsukami
Patrons: Amaterasu and Mikaboshi
Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2; Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4
Virtues: Ambition 3, Malice 2, Rapacity 2, Zealotry 2
Abilities: Academics 3, Art (Tattooing) 4, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Command 3, Fortitude 2, Integrity 3, Larceny 2, Melee 3, Occult 3, Presence 5, Stealth 4, Survival 1, Thrown 4
Birthrights: Creature (Shadow Dragon) 3, Follower (Oni) 5, Followers (15 Shinobi) 5, Follower (Two Tengu) 3, Followers (25 Yakuza Thugs) 5, Guide 5, Relic (Tattoos—Darkness, Sky) 5, Relic (Yata No Kagami—Sun) 5
Supernatural Powers:
Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 2 (Crushing Grip, Divine Wrath), Epic Dexterity 3 (Cat's Grace, Divine Balance, Ricochet Symphony), Epic Stamina 2 (Holy Fortitude, Self-Healing), Epic Charisma 3 (Blessing of Importance, Charmer, Inspirational Figure), Epic Intelligence 4 (Fast Learner, Language Mastery, Multitasking, Perfect Memory), Epic Wits 3 (Meditative Focus, Monkey in the Middle, Social Chameleon)
Boons: The Blinded Spirit, The Helpful Spirit, The Impressed Spirit, Night Eyes, Shadow Craft, Shadow Mask, Shadow Shroud, Shadow Step, Shadow Refuge, The Summoned Spirit, The Wakeful Spirit, The Watchful Spirit, Wind's Freedom
Join Battle: 7
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 7, Damage 4L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 6, Damage 7L, Parry DV 7, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 8, Damage 4L, Parry DV 8, Speed 4
Katana: Accuracy 7, Damage 9L, Parry DV 8, Speed 5
Wakizashi: Accuracy 7, Damage 7L, Parry DV 8, Speed 4
Black Shuriken (10): Accuracy 9, Damage 7L, Range 20, Speed 4, P
Soak: 2A/4L/5B
Health Levels: -0x5/-4/Incap
Dodge DV: 11 **Willpower:** 7
Legend: 7 **Legend Points:** 49
Other Notes: Kane's shadow dragon is a black dragon tattoo that circles his torso, which may animate and flow off his body to fight, growing in size as it does so. Despite the fact it appears physically to be a Japanese dragon made of pure shadow, its traits are identical to those of a coatl. Kane's tengu and oni followers may be summoned to his location via shadow tattoos of them. When Kane activates his Wind's Freedom Boon, the stylized wing tattoos that adorn his shoulders grow to become enormous wings composed of pure shadow. In addition to the Purview access it provides him, the Yata no Kagami allows him to communicate through any mirrored surface within (Legend x 5) miles and to use his Boons through such a surface as if he were there. He may also use the mirror to contact Mikaboshi, the August Star of Heaven, his Titan patron and guide, as long as the star Polaris is visible in the night sky.

ORLANDA ELLIOT
SCION OF XIPE TOTEC

Orlanda Elliot has begun to build a cult of Xipe Totec worshipers around herself. Avowed members of the vampire subculture, these cultists have been convinced of Orlanda's vampiric nature by her unearthly beauty and blood-fueled powers. Leading them to believe their sacrifices are made to placate an ancient vampire lord of Mesoamerica, she has used them to further her goals and those of the Shinsengumi. More than a few cultists have been surgically "improved" by Orlanda, according to her insane aesthetic.

Though still in love with Kane, she's has a growing crush on the Scion Ixion, based only on his monstrous creations, which she seeks a way to emulate. Also, rumors of another Scion of Xipe Totec operating in the World have reached her ears (thanks to the machinations of Loki). Wondering why her father felt she wasn't good enough to solely represent his interests, Orlanda would very much like to meet this other Scion and potentially bring her into the Shinsengumi. She often wonders if that Scion is prettier than her.

Her main weapon continues to be her relic obsidian dagger. Her new chac mool resides in the cult's headquarters, a warehouse owned by a subsidiary of Kuroko Industries. It is caked with the blood of the homeless and various (thus far) mortal enemies of Kane.

Calling: Disturbed Emo Girl
Nature: Penitent
Pantheon: Atzlánti
Patron: Xipe Totec
Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4; Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 2
Virtues: Conviction 3, Courage 2, Duty 2, Loyalty 3
Abilities: Academics 1, Art (Tattooing) 2, Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Craft (Self) 4, Empathy 3, Fortitude 6, Integrity 2, Larceny 1, Medicine 3, Melee 3, Occult 1, Presence 3, Stealth 2, Survival 2, Thrown 1
Birthrights: Followers (25 Goth Cultists) 5, Followers (Five Goth Thugs) 1, Relic (Chac Mool—Sun) 4, Relic (Obsidian Dagger—Fertility, Guardian, Health) 5
Supernatural Powers:
Epic Attributes: Epic Appearance 4 (Come Hither, Compelling Presence, Lasting Impression, Serpent's Gaze), Epic Stamina 5 (Damage Conversion, Regeneration, Self-Healing, Skin-Shedding, Solipsistic Well-Being)
Boons: Combat Sacrifice, Control Aging, Green Thumb, Heal/Inflict, Maguey Sting, Obsidian Excruciation, Obsidian Mutilation, *Poco a Poco*, Sacrifice of Will
Join Battle: 3
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 5, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 4, Damage 7B, Parry DV 2, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 6, Damage 4B, Parry DV 3, Speed 4
Obsidian Dagger: Accuracy 7, Damage 4L, Parry DV 3, Speed 4
Soak: 5A/14L/16B
Health Levels: -0x17/Incap
Dodge DV: 7 **Willpower:** 6
Legend: 7 **Legend Points:** 49
Other Notes: None

VICTOR FINGERS
SCION OF ARES

Much like Sly Guiler, Victor Fingers remains with the Band at his father's behest. Unlike the Scion of Loki, the warrior demigod has yet to realize he's on the wrong side of the ongoing conflict. A trained soldier, he's used to following orders without question. Doing otherwise is likely to get people killed. That's a shame, as Victor's the most scrupulous member of his Band and might successfully embolden Sly and Marie to leave the Band with him before things go too far.

Victor continues to wear the Armor of Achilles, but now he has a weapon to match in the relic labrys, called Enyalios, given to him by his father. He commands units of spartoi *and* myrmidons now, leading them to triumph after triumph thanks to his growing confidence in his ability to lead and his signaculum-channeled War Boons.

Calling: Ultimate Soldier

Nature: Bravo

Pantheon: Dodekatheon

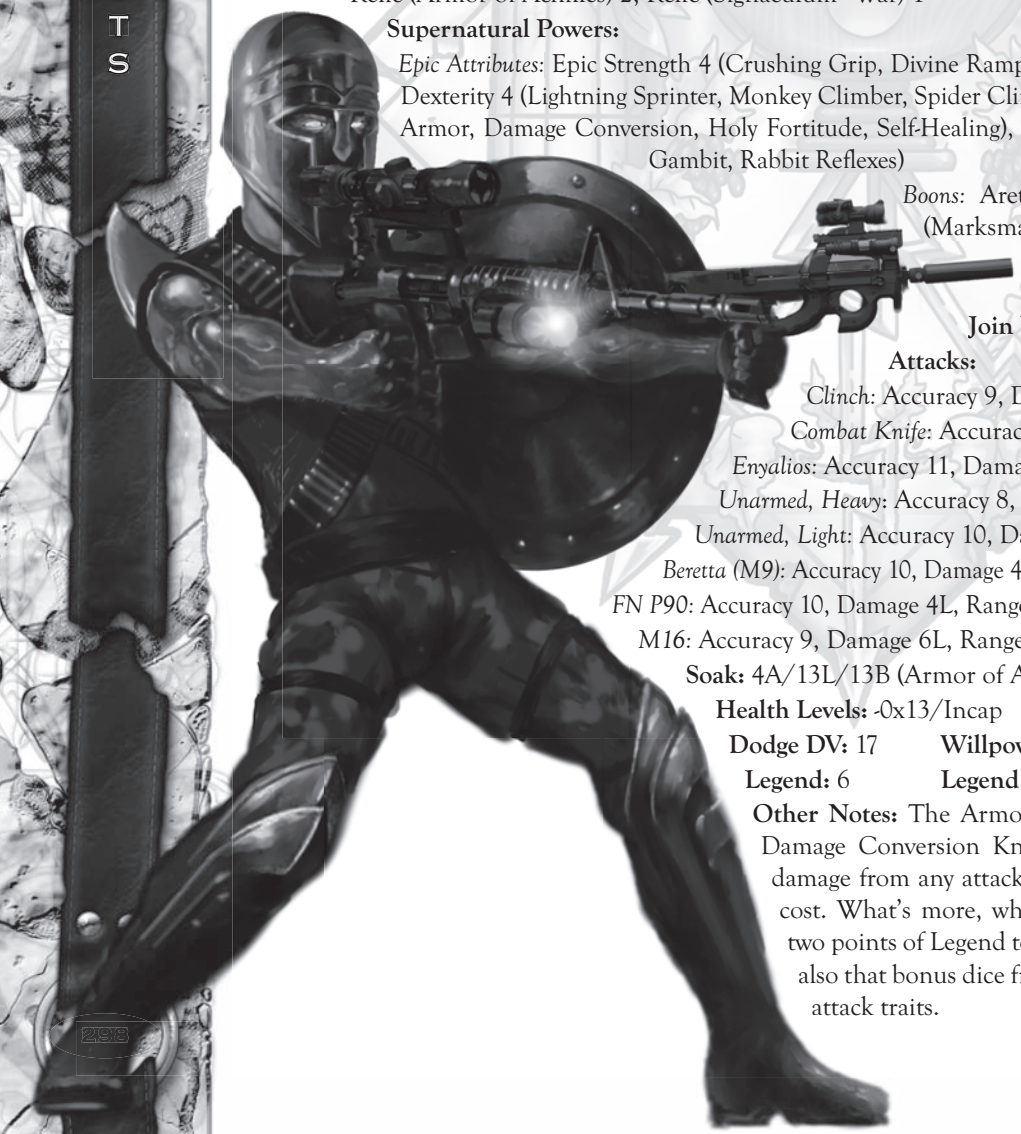
Patron: Ares

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 4; Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Expression 1, Intellect 2, Valor 3, Vengeance 3

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Command 3, Control 2, Craft (Demolition) 2, Fortitude 3, Integrity 2, Marksmanship 5, Melee 5, Presence 2, Stealth 2, Survival 3

Birthrights: Followers (15 Spartoi) 5, Followers (Five Myrmidons) 4, Relic (Dragon's Teeth) 3, Relic (Enyalios) 4, Relic (Armor of Achilles) 2, Relic (Signaculum—War) 1



Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 4 (Crushing Grip, Divine Rampage, Holy Rampage, Uplifting Might), Epic Dexterity 4 (Lightning Sprinter, Monkey Climber, Spider Climber, Trick Shooter), Epic Stamina 4 (Body Armor, Damage Conversion, Holy Fortitude, Self-Healing), Epic Wits 3 (Instant Assessment, Opening Gambit, Rabbit Reflexes)

Boons: Arete (Brawl) 2, Arete (Fortitude) 2, Arete (Marksmanship) 2, Arete (Melee) 2, Arete (Survival) 1, Battle Cry, Blessing of Bravery, Warrior Ideal (Myrmidon)

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 9, Damage 5L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Combat Knife: Accuracy 10, Damage 7L, Parry DV 12, Speed 4

Enyalios: Accuracy 11, Damage 14L, Parry DV 12, Speed 4, O3

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 8, Damage 8B, Parry DV 11, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 10, Damage 5B, Parry DV 12, Speed 4

Beretta (M9): Accuracy 10, Damage 4L, Range 20, Clip 15, Speed 4, P

FN P90: Accuracy 10, Damage 4L, Range 50, Clip 50, Speed 5, P

M16: Accuracy 9, Damage 6L, Range 150, Clip 30, Speed 5, P

Soak: 4A/13L/13B (Armor of Achilles, +4L/2B)

Health Levels: -0x13/Incap

Dodge DV: 17 **Willpower:** 6

Legend: 6 **Legend Points:** 36

Other Notes: The Armor of Achilles augments the power of the Damage Conversion Knack to reduce damage. It reduces lethal damage from any attack to bashing and bashing to nothing at no cost. What's more, while wearing the armor, Victor may spend two points of Legend to reduce aggravated damage to lethal. Note also that bonus dice from Arete are not included here in Victor's attack traits.

THE HAND OF TYR

The following are the members of the Hand of Tyr, the young Band of inexperienced Scions encountered by the players' characters on Aeaea (see p. 180).

JOAN DAVIS

SCION OF POSEIDON

Joan Davis was an Australian oceanographer who recently learned that her true father was Poseidon, the God of the Sea. Great Poseidon sent mermen to rescue Joan from aquatic titanspawn who sought to kill her while she was SCUBA diving near the Great Barrier Reef. The mermen explained that Poseidon took the form of Joan's human father in order to lay with Joan's mother, who went to her grave insisting that her husband (sea captain William Davis, who had been lost at sea for over a year before Joan was born) was Joan's true father. Now, Joan accepts the responsibility of patrolling the oceans for signs of titanspawn activity in her father's name. Beneath Joan's placid surface, however, a storm is brewing. She blames Poseidon for toying with her mother's mind and affections and for the mental problems that plagued her mother throughout Joan's formative years. What's more, she harbors a dark suspicion—did Poseidon himself deliberately kill William Davis in order to seduce Joan's mother?

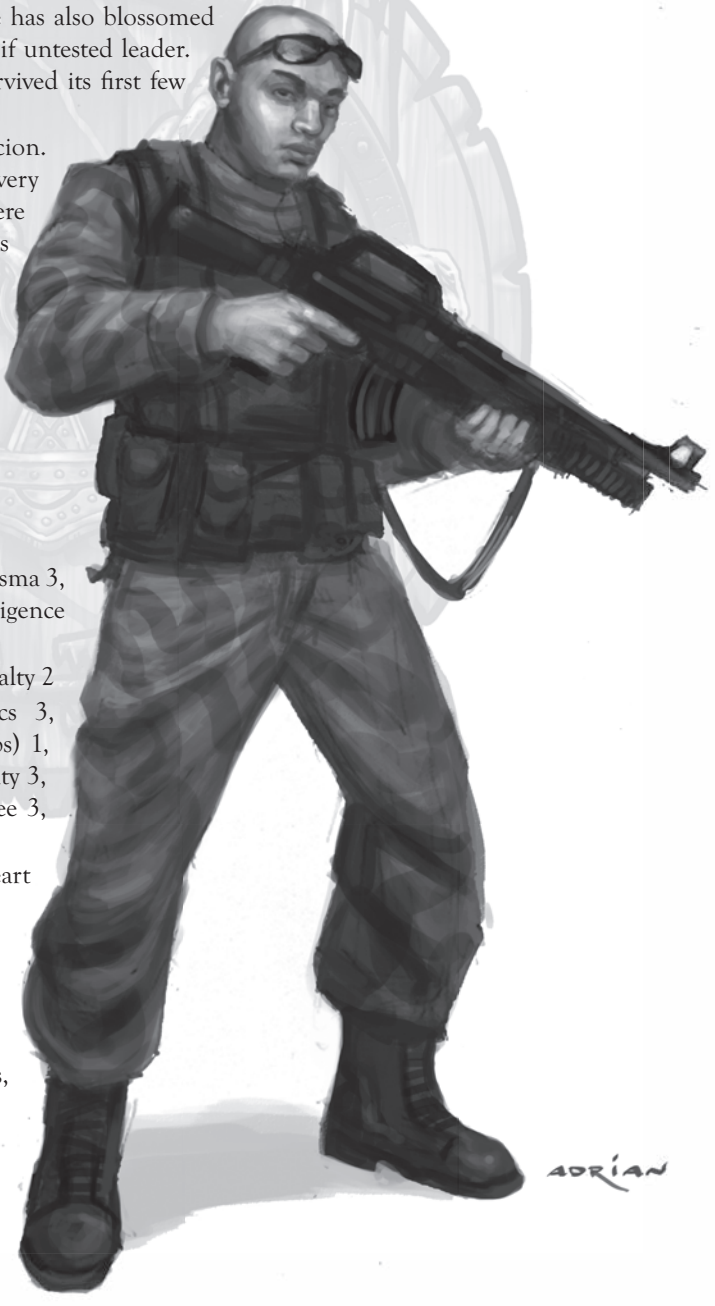
Calling: Oceanographer
Nature: Survivor
Pantheon: Dodekatheon
Patron: Poseidon
Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3; Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3
Virtues: Expression 1, Intellect 3, Valor 3, Vengeance 2
Abilities: Academics 3, Animal Ken 3, Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Brawl 1, Control (Boats) 3, Empathy 3, Fortitude 2, Integrity 2, Investigation 2, Marksmanship 1, Medicine 2, Melee 3, Science 3, Stealth 1, Survival 3
Birthrights: Relic (Golden Trident—Animal (Fish), Water) 4, Guide (Uncle Martin, a Classics professor at a local college) 1
Supernatural Powers:
Boons: Animal Communication (Fish), Animal Command (Fish), Animal Aspect (Fish), Arete (Melee) 2, Water Breathing, Water Control
Epic Attributes: Epic Dexterity 1 (Lightning Swimmer [as per Lightning Sprinter except it only applies while swimming]), Epic Manipulation 2 (Overt Order, Gods' Honest)
Join Battle: 5
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 4, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Speed 6
Golden Trident: Accuracy 8, Damage 7L, Parry DV 5, Speed 5
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 3, Damage 7B, Parry DV 2, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 5, Damage 4B, Parry DV 4, Speed 4
Soak: 2L/3B
Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap
Dodge DV: 6 **Willpower:** 6
Legend: 3 **Legend Points:** 9
Other Notes: None

Tyrone Norris
Scion of Tyr

Tyrone Norris was raised the son of an unwed black mother in San Diego, California. His mother told him little about his absent father, eventually revealing only that he was a white soldier stationed at nearby Camp Pendleton. Tyrone grew up ambivalent about his absentee white father, but chose to enter the military at 18, eventually joining the Marines like his father before him. His military career was a troubled one, however, as Tyrone suffered from anger-management issues, especially when confronted by white superior officers. Things came to a head when Tyrone struck a superior officer (Tyrone claimed the officer had made a racist remark), and the young man appeared headed for court martial and perhaps Leavenworth. Then, someone in the high brass intervened, and Tyrone was cleared of all charges and transferred to the Pentagon, where he became the "right-hand man" of General Bradley Worthington, an incarnation of Tyrone's true father, Tyr One-Handed, God of War.

To say that Tyrone was nonplussed at this discovery would be an understatement. Nevertheless, Tyrone adapted somewhat grudgingly to his new status as a Scion. While understandably bitter about growing up without a father, he has accepted that the trials of his life have been the Aesir equivalent of "tough love." By forcing Tyrone to grow up so fast and so young, Tyr made sure that Tyrone would be his own man and that he could decide whether to serve Tyr's agenda out of choice rather than filial obligation. Tyrone accepted Tyr's offer on those terms, and while the young Scion remains cool toward his father, he has also blossomed into a capable soldier and warrior, and an efficient if untested leader. He is the de facto head of his Band, and it has survived its first few battles in large part through his cool leadership.

Two factors limit Tyrone's effectiveness as a Scion. First, he still harbors some racial animosity and is very prone to see insults from whites where none were intended. Second, Tyrone has learned much of his father's history and is on the verge of having a full-blown phobia about part of it. Specifically, Tyrone has a completely irrational fear of losing a hand or some other body part and would prefer death to being "crippled" like Tyr was.



Calling: Squad Leader

Nature: Bravo

Pantheon: Aesir

Patron: Tyr

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3; Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Courage 3, Endurance 3, Expression 1, Loyalty 2

Abilities: Academics 2, Animal Ken 1, Athletics 3, Awareness 1, Brawl 3, Command 3, Control (Ships) 1, Control (Tracked) 1, Empathy 1, Fortitude 3, Integrity 3, Investigation 1, Marksmanship 4, Medicine 2, Melee 3, Presence 2, Stealth 2, Survival 3

Birthrights: Relic (Gen. Worthington's Purple Heart Medal—War) 1, Followers (Five Einherjar) 4

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Battle Cry, Blessing of Bravery, Jotunblut 2

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 2 (Crushing Grip, Uplifting Might), Epic Stamina 2 (Self-Healing, Solipsistic Well-Being), Epic Wits 2 (Meditative Focus, Opening Gambit)

Join Battle: 5

Attacks:

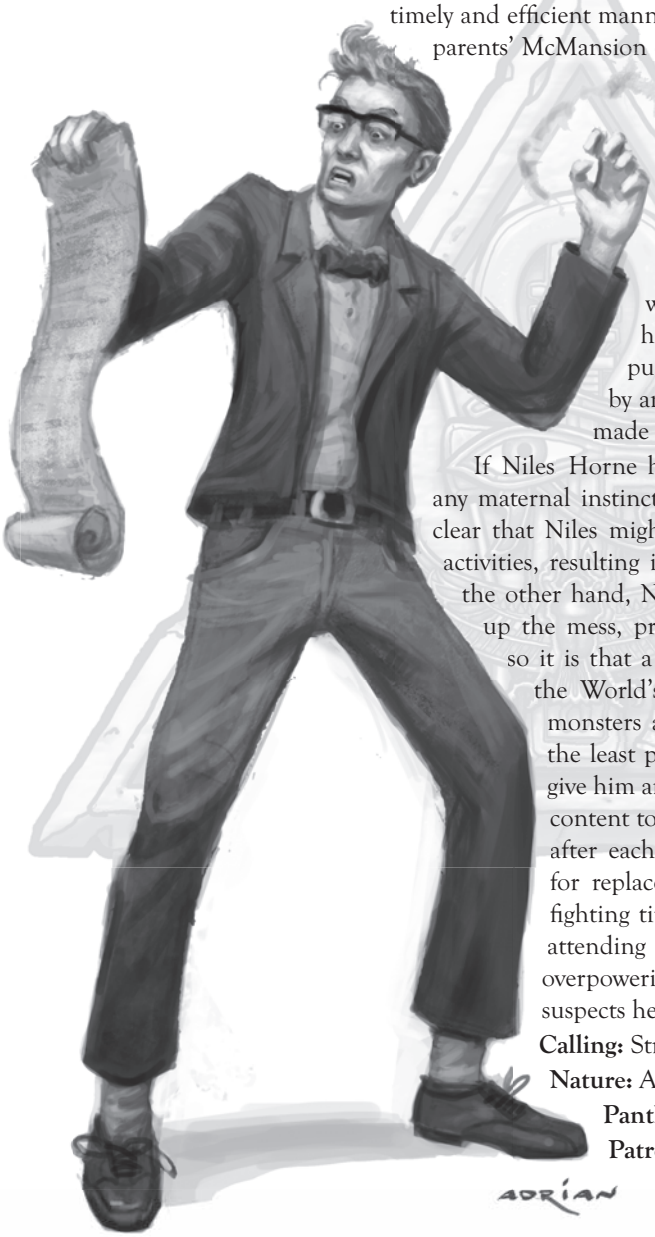
Clinch: Accuracy 7, Damage 5L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Combat Knife: Accuracy 8, Damage 7L, Parry DV 4, Speed 4
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 6, Damage 8B, Parry DV 3, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 8, Damage 5B, Parry DV 4, Speed 4
Beretta (M9): Accuracy 9, Damage 4L, Range 20, Speed 4, P
FN P90: Accuracy 9, Damage 4L, Range 50, Speed 5, P
M16: Accuracy 8, Damage 6L, Range 150, Speed 5, P
Soak: 2A/8L/10B (Interceptor body armor, +3L/3B)
Health Levels: -0x5/-4/Incap
Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 6
Legend: 3 **Legend Points:** 9
Other Notes: None

NILES HORNE

SCION OF ISIS

Niles Horne wasn't born into a life of privilege, but he was certainly adopted into it pretty quickly. His adoptive parents, wealthy industrialist Malcolm Horne and his wife Cynthia, were unable to conceive naturally and were too impatient to go through normal adoption procedures. Enter the Mother of Life Adoption Agency: a discrete European adoption agency that specializes in helping the rich and famous secure the most adorable new infants in a timely and efficient manner. Young Niles grew up in the lap of luxury in his parents' McMansion on Riverside Drive in Memphis, Tennessee, with a panoramic view of the Memphis Pyramid. Even before leaving high school, Niles had a better understanding of finance and banking than most college students. Once he graduated from Vanderbilt with a Masters in Finance, he was finally sharp enough to see just how crooked Malcolm Horne's business practices were. Unfortunately, Malcolm dropped dead of a heart attack, and the brittle, controlling Cynthia pushed Niles to conceal Malcolm's criminal activities by any means necessary. And then, Niles' birth mother made her presence known.

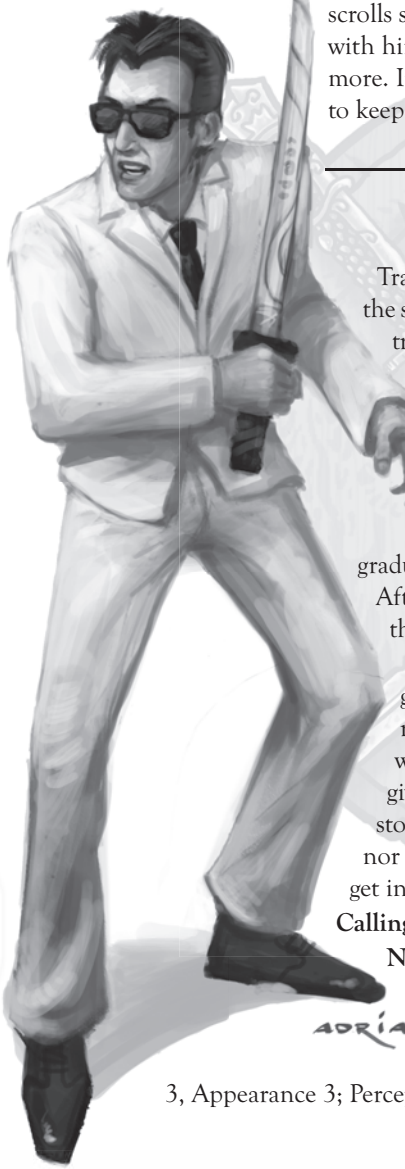


If Niles Horne had any illusions that Isis sought him out due to any maternal instinct, he was quickly disabused of them. Isis made it clear that Niles might be held personally liable for Malcolm Horne's activities, resulting in financial ruin at best and prison at worst. On the other hand, Niles' mother would be more than happy to clean up the mess, provided that Niles acts as her earthly agent. And so it is that a rather neurotic young stock broker with perhaps the World's worst Oedipus complex finds himself hunting monsters along with a Band of hardened warriors. Niles is the least physically powerful of his Band, and Isis refuses to give him any permanent relic Birthrights. Instead, he must be content to rely on papyrus scrolls that lose their effectiveness after each use... at which time he must call upon "Mom" for replacements. Also, Niles must split his time between fighting titanspawn, running his late father's brokerage and attending to his now-invalid adoptive mother Cynthia. Two overpowering, controlling mothers. Is it any wonder that Niles suspects he might be gay?

Calling: Stressed-Out Businessman
Nature: Architect
Pantheon: Pesedjet
Patron: Isis

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3; Perception 2, Intelligence 5, Wits 4
Virtues: Conviction 2, Harmony 2, Order 3, Piety 2
Abilities: Academics 4, Athletics 1, Awareness 2, Brawl 1, Command 4, Control 1, Empathy 3, Fortitude 2, Integrity 1, Investigation 1, Melee 2, Occult 2, Politics 4, Presence 2, Science 3, Stealth 2, Survival 1
Birthrights: Creature (Serpopard) 3, Followers (Five Miniature Shabti) 1, Papyrus Scrolls (Magic)
Supernatural Powers:
Boons: Magic 2, Ren Harvest, Sekem Barrier, Sekem Blaze
Epic Attributes: Epic Manipulation 2 (Overt Order, Instant Hypnosis)
Spells: Ariadne's Thread, Bona Fortuna, Evil Eye, Trading Fates, The Unlidded Eye
Join Battle: 5
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 3, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 2, Damage 7B, Parry DV 1, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 4, Damage 4B, Parry DV 2, Speed 4
Soak: 1L/2B

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap
Dodge DV: 3 **Willpower:** 5
Legend: 3 **Legend Points:** 9
Other Notes: Niles is under the belief (inspired by Isis) that he must burn the papyrus scrolls she gives him in order to work his magic. He typically has about a dozen scrolls with him, but when all of them are burned, he can no longer use magic until he gets more. In fact, burning the scrolls is not essential to working the magic, but Isis wants to keep Niles dependent on her for the time being.



TJ MOON

SCION OF TSUKI-YOMI

Travis Moon, Jr. (aka TJ) was conceived in Okinawa, but born in the US. Ostensibly the son of US Naval Sgt. Travis Moon and his Japanese bride, Suzumi Nakamora, TJ's true father was the moon God Tsuki-Yomi, who came to Suzumi in dreams on her wedding night. Neither she nor Travis, Sr. ever suspected divine intervention in TJ's conception, and Travis brought his young bride back with him to Odessa, Texas, at the end of his tour in the Navy. Growing up in Odessa was tough on TJ—despite his All-American name, his Asian features marked him as an outsider in the rural community in which he was raised. His true father's natural charisma shone through, though, and by the time TJ graduated high school, he was Student Body President and editor of the school paper. After graduation, TJ started at UT-Austin working on a journalism degree. Then, the Titans broke free, and Tsuki-Yomi came for his son.

TJ dropped out of college but soon found work with *The Weekly Oracle*, a gaudy, tabloid newspaper that, if one is clever enough to read between the lines, reports the activities of Gods and demigods and the movements of titanspawn with remarkable accuracy. While TJ's earthly parents are aghast that he would give up his future to work for such a tawdry rag, TJ feels he's getting at the real story in a way that a "legitimate" journalist never could. TJ is neither the leader nor the "brains" of his Band. Instead, he is the "face-man"—the charmer who can get in anywhere and find out what's going on.

Calling: Tabloid Journalist
Nature: Gallant
Pantheon: Amatsukami
Patron: Tsuki-Yomi
Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3; Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Virtues: Duty 2, Endurance 2, Intellect 3, Valor 2
Abilities: Academics 3, Athletics 2, Awareness 4, Brawl 3, Control 1, Craft (Origami) 2, Empathy 5, Fortitude 2, Integrity 3, Investigation 5, Larceny 4, Melee 2, Occult 4, Politics 3, Presence 3, Stealth 3, Survival 2, Thrown 2
Birthrights: Relic (Black Ray-Ban Sunglasses—Darkness, Moon) 2, Relic (Moonsilver Light, an enchanted katana—Psychopomp) 3
Supernatural Powers:
Boons: Night Eyes, Shadow Mask, Smoking Mirror, Tidal Interference, Unerring Orientation, The Wakeful Spirit, The Watchful Spirit, Where Are You?
Epic Attributes: Epic Charisma 2 (Charmer, Benefit of the Doubt)
Join Battle: 8
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 5, Damage 3B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P
Moonsilver Light: Accuracy 6, Damage 8L, Parry DV 3, Speed 5
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 4, Damage 6B, Parry DV 2, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 6, Damage 3B, Parry DV 3, Speed 4
Soak: 1L/2B
Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap
Dodge DV: 4 **Willpower:** 5
Legend: 3 **Legend Points:** 9
Other Notes: None

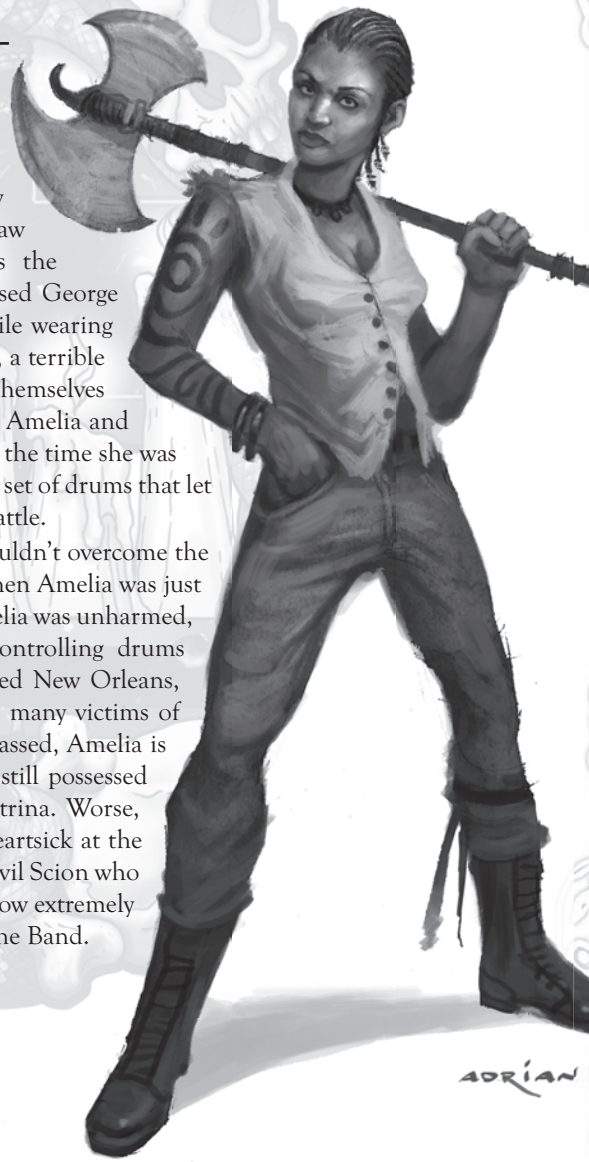
AMELIA BATTELLE

SCION OF SHANGO

Unlike most Scions, Amelia never wondered about her parentage. When she was six years old, her parents—a New Orleans mambo named Louisa Battelle and her common-law husband George—explained that Amelia's true father was the Loa of thunder and lightning, Shango. The God had possessed George Battelle during a Vodoun ritual and made love to Louisa while wearing that form. Nine months later, Amelia was born, while outside, a terrible thunderstorm raged across New Orleans, as if the heavens themselves were announcing Amelia's birth. Louisa and George sheltered Amelia and taught her of her heritage and of how best to serve the Loa. By the time she was 14, Amelia had already received Birthright gifts from her sire—a set of drums that let her shape the weather and a double axe that she carries into battle.

Unfortunately, however, Amelia's training and pedigree couldn't overcome the disadvantages of inexperience and naïveté. In May of 2005, when Amelia was just 17, she was attacked in her home by an unknown assailant. Amelia was unharmed, but her mother Louisa was killed, and Amelia's weather-controlling drums were stolen. Three months later, Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans, destroying Amelia's home. Her father George was one of the many victims of the hurricane's destruction. Even after all the time that has passed, Amelia is wracked by survivor's guilt. She is convinced that if she had still possessed her Birthright drums, she could have diverted Hurricane Katrina. Worse, Amelia never did find out who stole her drums, and she is heartsick at the thought that the mysterious thief was a titanspawn or even an evil Scion who used her drums to summon Katrina into existence. Amelia is now extremely insecure about her worthiness to be a Scion and her place in the Band.

Calling: Guilt-Ridden Priestess
Nature: Penitent
Pantheon: Loa
Patron: Shango



Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2; Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Harmony 2, Order 2, Piety 3, Vengeance 2

Abilities: Animal Ken 2, Art (Music) 1, Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Command 2, Empathy 3, Fortitude 2, Integrity 2, Investigation 2, Larceny 3, Marksmanship 1, Medicine 3, Melee 3, Occult 4, Politics 2, Presence 3, Stealth 2, Survival 1, Thrown 1

Birthrights: Relic (Batá Drums—Sky) 1, Relic (Oshe Double Axe—Justice) 3, Followers (Five Mortal Vodouisants) 1

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Guilt Apparitions, Judgment, Petro's Hands, Rada's Eyes, Sky's Grace, Storm Augmentation, Wind's Freedom

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 3 (Crushing Grip, Holy Rampage, Uplifting Might)

Join Battle: 5

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 5, Damage 3L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Oshe Axe: Accuracy 8, Damage 8L, Parry DV 3, Speed 4

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 4, Damage 6B, Parry DV 2, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 6, Damage 3B, Parry DV 3, Speed 4

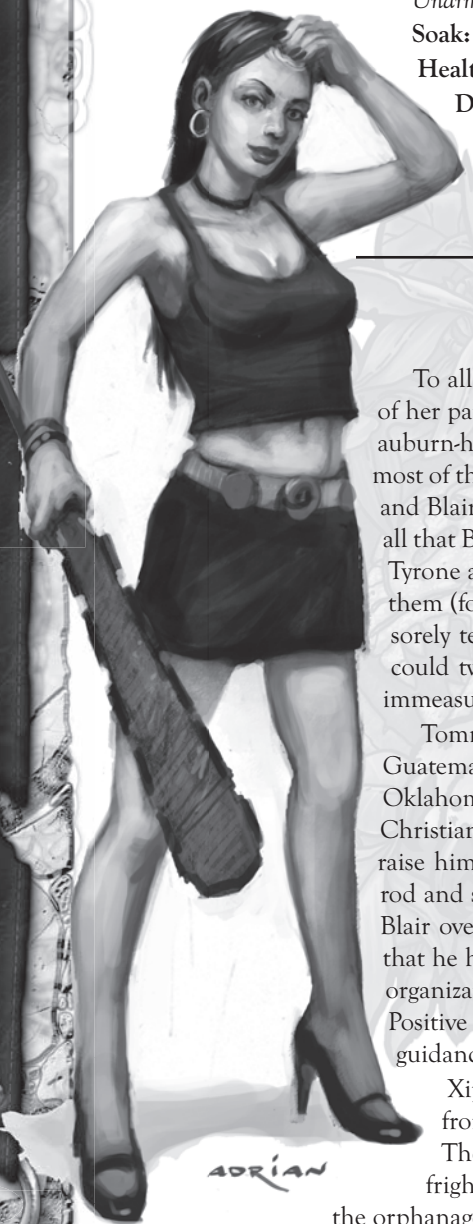
Soak: 1L/2B

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 5

Legend: 4 **Legend Points:** 16

Other Notes: Amelie's drums have been stolen by persons unknown, and she cannot use her Sky Purview Boons until they are recovered.



BLAIR THOMAS

SCION OF XIPE TOTEC

To all appearances, Blair Thomas is the most stable member of the Band. She learned of her parentage at the age of 16, much earlier than most of her compatriots. Now 24, the auburn-haired beauty is the most experienced Scion in the group. While she defers to Tyrone most of the time, it's mainly because being perceived as the leader is more important to him, and Blair is more than happy to offer guidance behind the scenes. On the other hand, for all that Blair brings to the Band, she is also the one person most likely to tear it apart. Both Tyrone and TJ are infatuated with Blair, and while she has avoided encouraging either of them (for fear of how it would affect the Band), she is equally attracted to both men and sorely tempted to pursue a relationship with one—or both. (Blair is fairly confident she could two-time her fellow Scions without either knowing.) Complicating this situation immeasurably is the fact that Blair Thomas is actually a man.

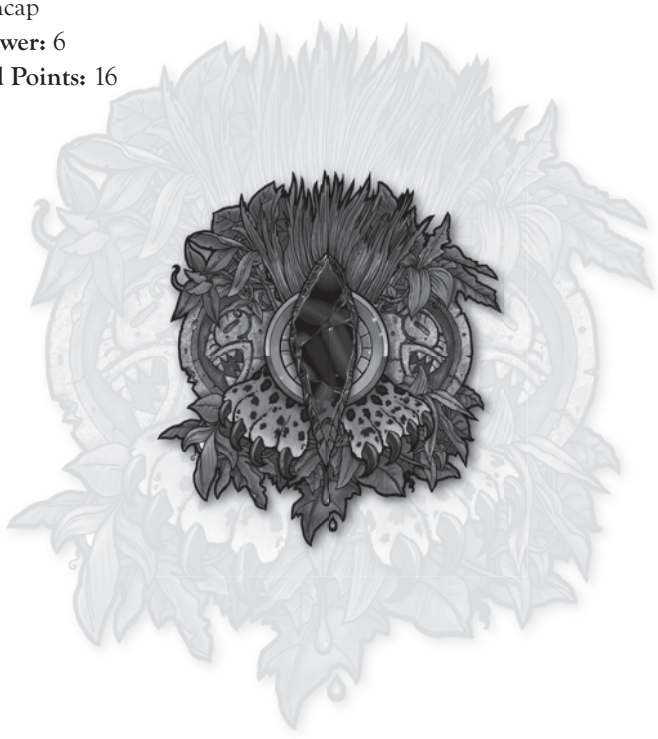
Tommy Blair (originally Tomas) was left as an infant in a Catholic orphanage in Guatemala. From there, he was adopted at the age of six by the Blair family of Enid, Oklahoma. Unfortunately for Tommy, the Blairs were a very strict Fundamentalist Christian family who strove to erase any sign of Tommy's Guatemalan heritage and to raise him according to their extremely conservative beliefs, one of which was "spare the rod and spoil the child." Things got worse just before Tommy's 16th birthday, when Mrs. Blair overheard Tommy confess to a friend that he thought he might be gay and wished that he had been born a girl. The Blairs immediately contacted a fundamentalist "ex-gay" organization called Positive Love and told Tommy that he would be required to move to a Positive Love facility for help with his "sinful urges." That night, Tommy prayed to God for guidance and strength. And God answered. Or at least, *a* God answered.

Xipe Totec, the Flayed Lord himself, appeared to Tommy and spirited him away from the Blair household to a secret cult of worshipers across the border in Texas. There, the cultists explained to Tommy that Xipe Totec was his father, but that his frightened mother fled the cult and abandoned Tommy to a priest who sent him to the orphanage.

For the next two years, Tommy was trained in the ways and lore of the Atzlánti. On his 18th birthday, Xipe Totec appeared again and presented Tommy with the most beautiful gift he had ever seen—the skin of a stunningly beautiful young woman with auburn hair and a perfect ivory complexion. At his father's direction, Tommy donned the skin over his own, and in that instant, Tommy Blair became Blair Thomas. As long as Tommy continues to wear the skin (which never decays), he is biologically a woman in every respect. As Blair, "she" has spent the last six years doing her father's bidding and wondering if she would ever meet a man who could love her enough to accept the truth of her gender.

One other complication haunts Blair's life, one of which she isn't even aware. Tomas was not the only child left at that Guatemalan orphanage. An infant girl once named Maria was left there as well. While Maria was adopted into a life of wealth and privilege, her life in America would be just as miserable in its own way as that of Tomas. Xipe Totec has never told either of his children that they have a twin sibling, and it is possible that even the Flayed Lord himself fears what will happen when Blair Thomas and Orlanda Elliot finally meet face-to-face.

Calling: Charming Mediator
Nature: Visionary
Pantheon: Atzlánti
Patron: Xipe Totec
Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 5; Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4
Virtues: Conviction 3, Courage 2, Duty 2, Loyalty 3
Abilities: Academics 1, Animal Ken 2, Art (Singing) 1, Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Brawl 1, Command 1, Control (Automobile) 1, Empathy 3, Fortitude 2, Integrity 4, Medicine 1, Melee 3, Occult 4, Politics 1, Presence 4, Stealth 3, Survival 2, Thrown 1
Birthrights: Relic (Maquahuitl) 5, Relic (Native Herbs—Death, Guardian, Health) 3
Supernatural Powers:
Boons: Aegis, Assess Health, Combat Sacrifice, Death Senses, Maguey Sting, Obsidian Mutilation, Vigil Brand, Ward
Epic Attributes: Epic Stamina 2 (Self-Healing, Regeneration)
Join Battle: 6
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 4, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 3, Damage 7B, Parry DV 1, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 5, Damage 4B, Parry DV 3, Speed 4
Maquahuitl: Accuracy 8, Damage 8L/B, Parry DV 4, Speed 4
Soak: 2A/4L/5B
Health Levels: -0x5/-4/Incap
Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 6
Legend: 4 **Legend Points:** 16
Other Notes: None



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Name | Calling | Pantheon

Player | Nature | God

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●○○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□	Charisma	●○○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□	Perception	●○○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□
Dexterity	●○○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□	Manipulation	●○○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□	Intelligence	●○○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□
Stamina	●○○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□	Appearance	●○○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□	Wits	●○○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□

ABILITIES

□ Academics	○○○○○	□ Craft	○○○○○	□ Melee	○○○○○
□ Animal Ken	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Occult	○○○○○
□ Art	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	○○○○○	□ Presence	○○○○○
□ Athletics	○○○○○	□ Fortitude	○○○○○	□ Science	○○○○○
□ Awareness	○○○○○	□ Integrity	○○○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Brawl	○○○○○	□ Investigation	○○○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Command	○○○○○	□ Larceny	○○○○○	□ Stealth	○○○○○
□ Control	○○○○○	□ Marksmanship	○○○○○	□ Survival	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	○○○○○	□ Thrown	○○○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

WEAPONS

KNACKS

WILLPOWER

○○○○○○○○○○

□□□□□□□□□□

VIRTUES

○○○○○

○○○○○

○○○○○

○○○○○

SOAK

A____ L____ B____

LEGEND

○○○○○○ ○○○○○○ Legend Pts

BOONS

ARMOR

A____ L____ B____

HEALTH

0	-1	-1	-2	-2	-4	I
□	□	□	□	□	□	□
□	□	□	□	□	□	
□	□	□	□	□	□	
□	□	□	□	□	□	
	□	□	□	□		

EXPERIENCE

SCION—DEMIGOD

SCION—DEMIGOD

Live the Myth

While the Overworld War rages
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ISBN 978-1-58846-469-9 WW75001 $34.99US

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PRINTED IN CANADA

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